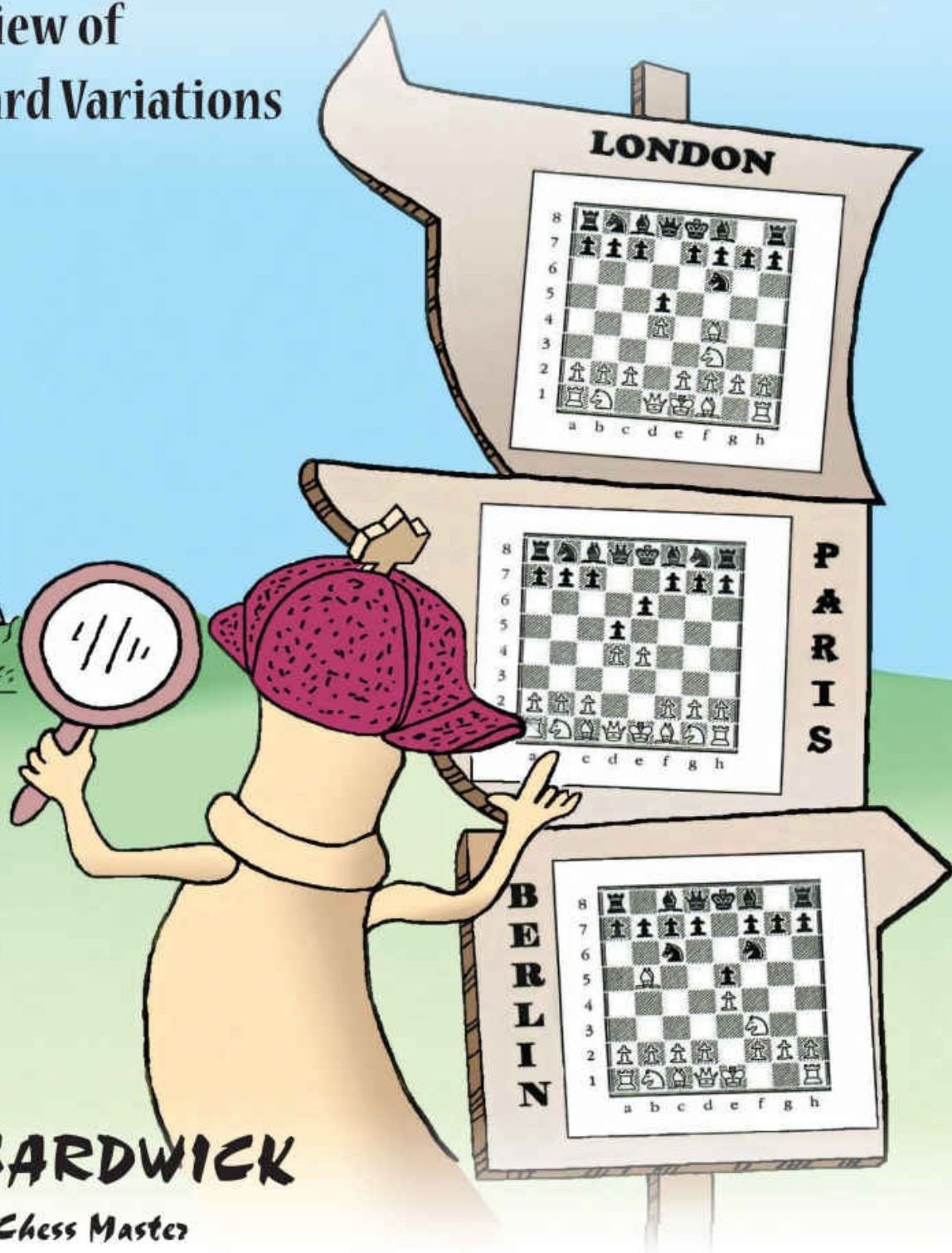


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Chess Openings

An Overview of
Standard Variations

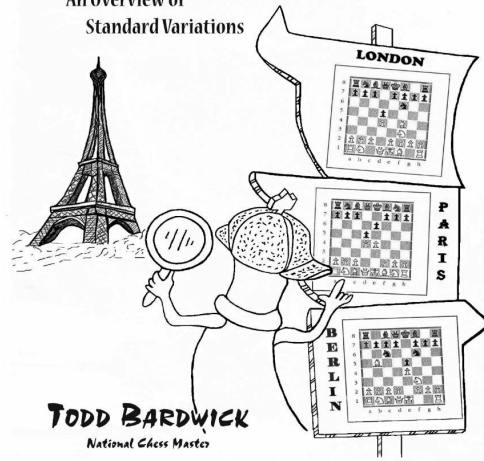


TODD BARDWICK

National Chess Master

Chess Openings

An Overview of
Standard Variations



Chess Detective Press

Chess Openings
An Overview of Standard Variations

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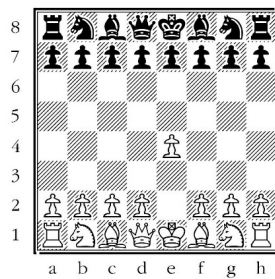
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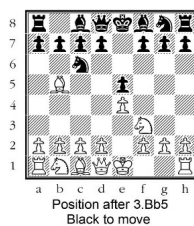
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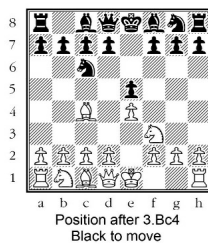


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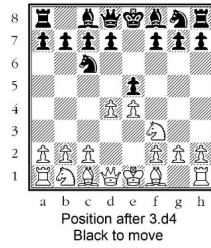
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Italian Game



Scotch Game



Three Knights and Four Knights Game



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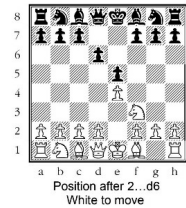


1.e4 e5 2.Nf3

Petroff Defense



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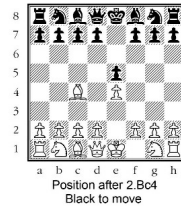


Latvian Gambit

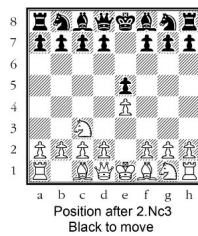


1.e4 e5

Bishop's Opening



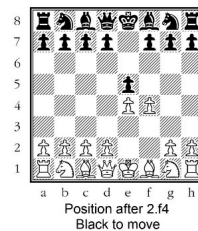
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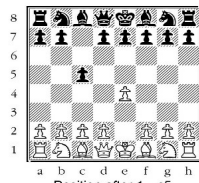


King's Gambit



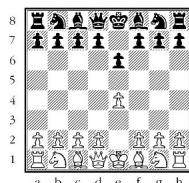
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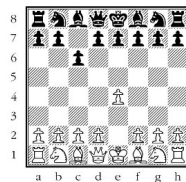
Position after 1...c5
White to move

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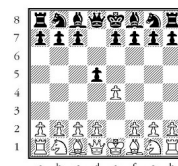
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White to move

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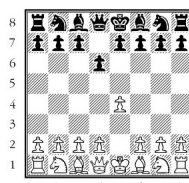
Position after 1...c6
White to move

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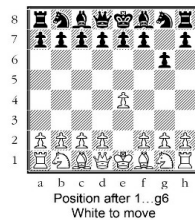
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White to move

Pirc Defense

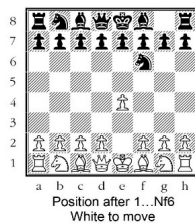


Position after 1...d6
White to move

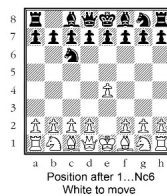
Modern Defense



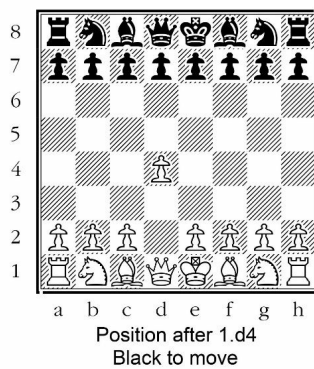
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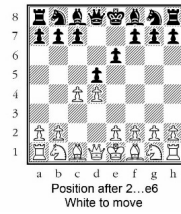


Queen's Pawn Openings

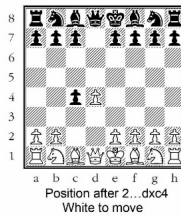


1.d4 d5 2.c4

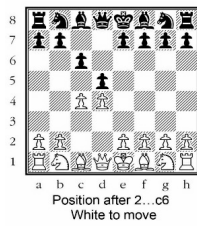
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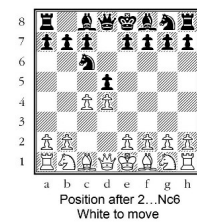
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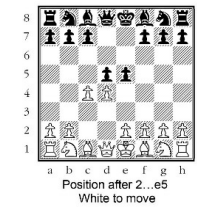
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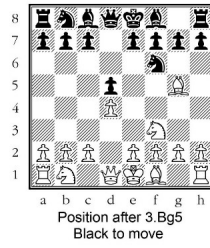


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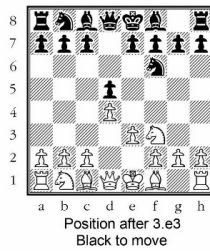


1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6

Torre Attack



Colle System

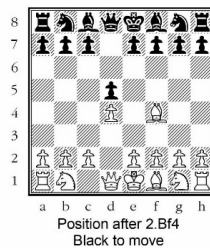


London System

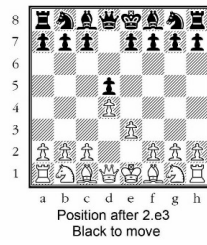


1.d4 d5

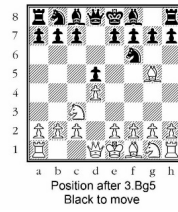
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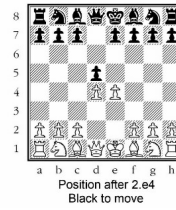
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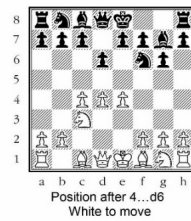


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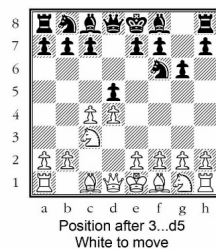


1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6

King's Indian Defense

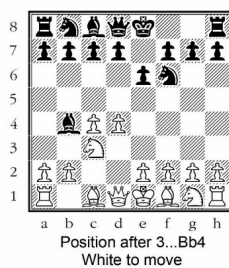


Grünfeld Defense

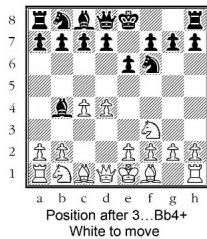


1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6

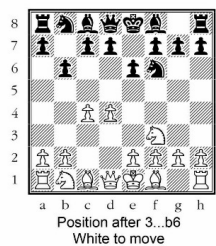
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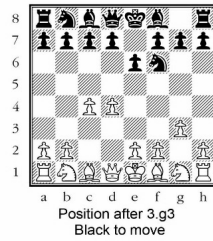
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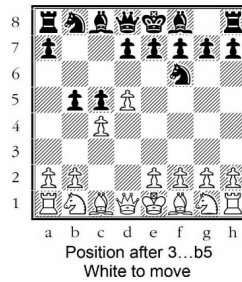


Catalan Opening

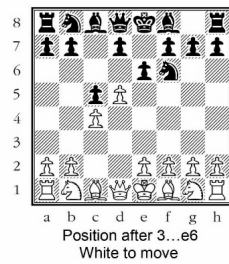


1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5

Benko Gambit

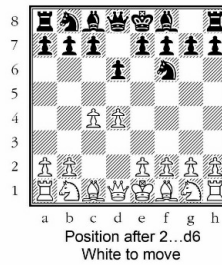


Benoni Defense

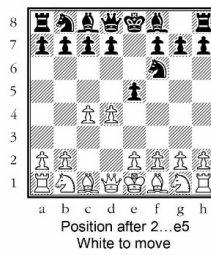


1.d4 Nf6 2.c4

Old Indian Defense

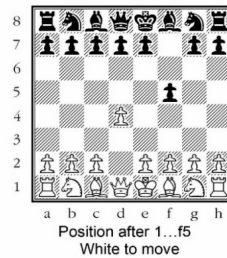


Budapest Gambit

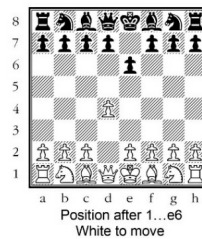


1.d4

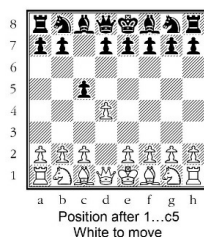
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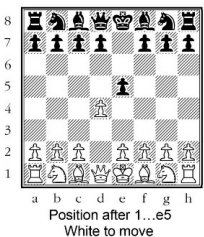
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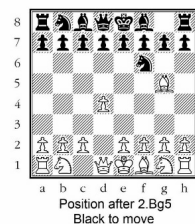
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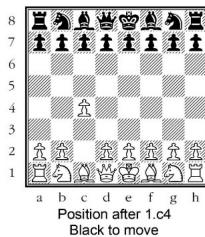
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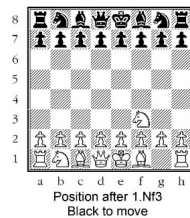
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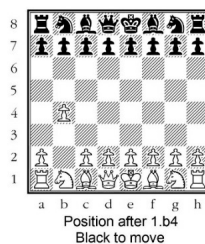
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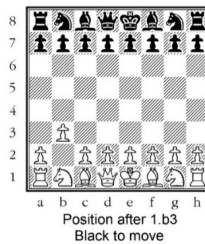
Zukertort Opening



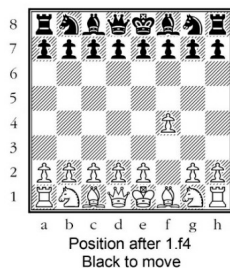
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Bird's Opening



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INTRODUCTION

Tigran Petrosian, World Champion from 1963 to 1969, said “To study opening variations without reference to the strategy that applies to the middlegame is, in effect, to separate the head from the body.”

Openings vary in character from closed positions requiring accurate positional play to open positions characterized by tactics and combinations.

In most openings, White gains a slight advantage due to the benefit of having the first move; Black’s goal is to equalize the position with the hope to gain an advantage later.

Opening Principles

The main opening principles are to control the center, develop your pieces, and castle early.

Following these principles and keeping them in balance should result in good positions as you enter the middlegame.

Taking the types of advantages into account, controlling the center results in more space, which enhances piece activity. Developing means bringing the pieces into the game. Castling improves king safety and piece activity since it also develops a rook.

Also try to win material if possible and maintain a good pawn structure. In open positions, keep in mind that the bishop pair is worth about half a pawn in material.

You generally want to keep your queen out of the battle, just moving her cautiously to clear the back rank to connect the rooks after castling.

Try to stay in balance and not spend too much time focusing on control of the center and developing; postponing castling increases the odds that you won’t be able to castle at

all since it gives your opponent time to develop more pieces and create more serious threats against the king.

Of course, there are exceptions to every rule and sometimes it may be best to delay castling for a few moves in favor of a developing move that creates an immediate threat.

1.e4, 1.d4, and to a lesser extent 1.c4 are the most popular first moves for White.

Although some moves are better than others, there is often no clear right or wrong move as long as you follow the basic opening principles.

How do you handle surprise moves from your opponent? Go back to basics...ask yourself how you can control the center, what is the best square for each of your pieces, and where is a safe place for the king.

If you reach the middlegame and some of your opening goals are not completed, those goals now become an immediate priority.

Other things to consider once the game leaves the opening and enters the middlegame are on which part of the board you want to expand and attack (usually where you have more space and pieces), how you can take advantage of weaknesses in your opponent's position, and how you can shore up weaknesses in your own position.

History

Opening theory has changed and evolved over the years.

In the Romantic era, during the 18th to late 19th century, a swashbuckling style of quick tactical maneuvers was generally favored over long-term strategic planning. Pawn sacrifices for piece activity, also known as gambits (see next section), were commonly played in the opening during this time. Some of the major players during the Romantic era were Adolf Anderssen, Paul Morphy, and Henry Blackburne.

The Classical school of thought was popularized in the

1890s by Siegbert Tarrasch and the 1st World Champion Wilhelm Steinitz. The Classical school emphasized control of the center and the positional importance of “static” advantages like strong outposts for knights, avoiding pawn weaknesses, and striving for “good” rather than “bad” bishops in closed positions.

The Hypermodern school of thought, generally attributed to Aron Nimzowitsch and Richard Réti, emerged in the 1920s. The hypermodernists invited the opponent to occupy the center with pawns with the goal of then attacking those pawns, often from the flank. Often a bishop would fianchetto and the player would castle quickly while the opponent attempted to reinforce the pawn center.

Today’s masters apply a blend of all these schools of thought.

Gambits

A gambit is when a player offers material (usually a pawn) with the goal of gaining time to develop quickly or achieving a positional advantage like control of the center or a superior pawn structure.

Aggressive or tactical players may prefer openings with gambits.

The opponent usually has the choice to accept or decline the gambit.

Due to the importance of controlling the center, offering a side pawn is usually less of a commitment than offering a center pawn. On the other hand, opening a center file can open more important lines for attack.

A gambit is considered sound if the player receives sufficient compensation for the loss of material. In the case of a sound gambit, the opponent often returns the extra material later at an advantageous time. For less sound gambits, the accepting player is more likely to successfully retain the extra

material.

Relating material to time, a pawn is usually considered to be worth 2-3 moves (or tempi) in the opening.

In other words, if you can win a pawn in two moves, it is often worth capturing, assuming the capturing piece doesn't get trapped. Taking three or more moves to win a pawn is often not worth the effort. If your opponent accepts the gambit material instead of developing, you should attack quickly before your opponent catches up in development.

Accepting gambit material when playing White is often safer than accepting it when playing with the Black pieces since White already has an extra tempo by virtue of having the first move.

Gambits are often more effective in faster time controls since the opponent has less time to find a refutation.

Purpose and Layout of the book

The primary purpose of this book is to map out the main openings with the strategic ideas for each side to help the reader decide which opening systems they would like to pursue.

The main variations will be presented with many of the common minor variations; however, a complete listing of all minor variations is impossible due to the near infinite number of possibilities.

Selected lines give the reader a variety of representative positions to examine in order to get a general flavor for each opening system.

This book gives a basic outline of each opening; it is not intended as a repertoire book that gives detailed analysis for each specific move.

Since a line needs to be drawn somewhere as to how many rare openings to present, obscure moves like 1.a3, 1.c3, 1.g4, etc. are not included.

A secondary goal is to give the reader practice at evaluating a variety of different opening and early middlegame positions.

After playing enough moves to reach a standard position, a brief note of the strengths and weaknesses in the position and a possible plan for each side is presented.

Taking time to examine these sample positions at the end of the text variations (even if you aren't choosing to play that particular opening) will give you practice at identifying chess strategies going into the middlegame. Keep in mind this is a very basic analysis giving only a few possibilities of what can be literally hundreds of playable variations for a given opening system.

The book is divided into three sections: King's Pawn Openings, Queen's Pawn Openings, and Flank Openings.

At the start of each opening, there is a flowchart with diagrams of the major variations (see the Flowchart Index in the back of the book).

An Opening Index (listing the variations within each opening in the order they appear) is included at the back of the book as well as a Glossary that gives a quick reference for chess terms and words that you may not recognize.

Selecting an Opening System

To pick the best opening system for you, you will need to determine what type of player you are and what types of positions you are comfortable playing.

Tactical players tend to like more open positions and gambits where tactics abound. These are often referred to as "sharp" openings and need to be studied carefully and deeply since more traps are present. Rapid piece development is critical in open positions.

Positional players tend to prefer more closed and strategic

positions. These positions are slower to develop and have more subtle nuances. Slower development is possible in closed positions since the pawns create a barrier between the players.

Although this book will focus more on the main lines, you may want to choose offbeat or more obscure variations or moves since they are less familiar to the opponent, which potentially also offers a psychological benefit.

You especially need a strong defense for 1.e4 when you are playing Black since it is White's most common first move.

Tips and Terminology

A danger to be aware of when studying specific opening lines is memorizing moves or variations. It is more important to learn the basic themes for a specific opening and be observant when evaluating positions. Always try to understand why you are making each move.

Standard opening moves are referred to as "book moves". A player is said to be "out of book" when the game deviates from their known opening theory. Once you are out of your book knowledge, you should assess positions with the basic opening principles in mind.

Often a main line of one opening can transpose (reach the same future position with a different move order) into another opening. Also moves and variations within the same opening often transpose.

Some opening variations have multiple names, depending on the source selected by the author. Many are named after a prominent player who made them famous or the city or country where the player was born or resided in at the time. Other variations don't have specific names.

The opening "tree" can become incredibly complicated. The complexity of chess openings makes mapping out all the

possibilities an impossible task. Opening theory is constantly changing in part due to the advancement of computer chess programs (also called engines) that are capable of very deep analysis. Some variations have come in and out of popularity over the decades.

Further Study

There are many excellent detailed specialty books written on each opening that cover specific moves and traps in each opening system.

Entire books written on a single opening show in great detail how masters have used the basic opening principles to begin the game. These specific opening books will be useful once you reach the higher rating levels.

Once you find an opening system you like, you can test variations with chess engines to get ideas not mentioned in books. Computers make excellent training partners because they can quickly and accurately calculate tactics and combinations.

To increase your chess skills and knowledge in other areas of the game see the other books in the Chess Detective® series: *Chess Strategy Workbook*, *Chess Endgame Workbook*, *Chess Tactics and Combinations Workbook*, and *Attacking the Chess King Workbook*.

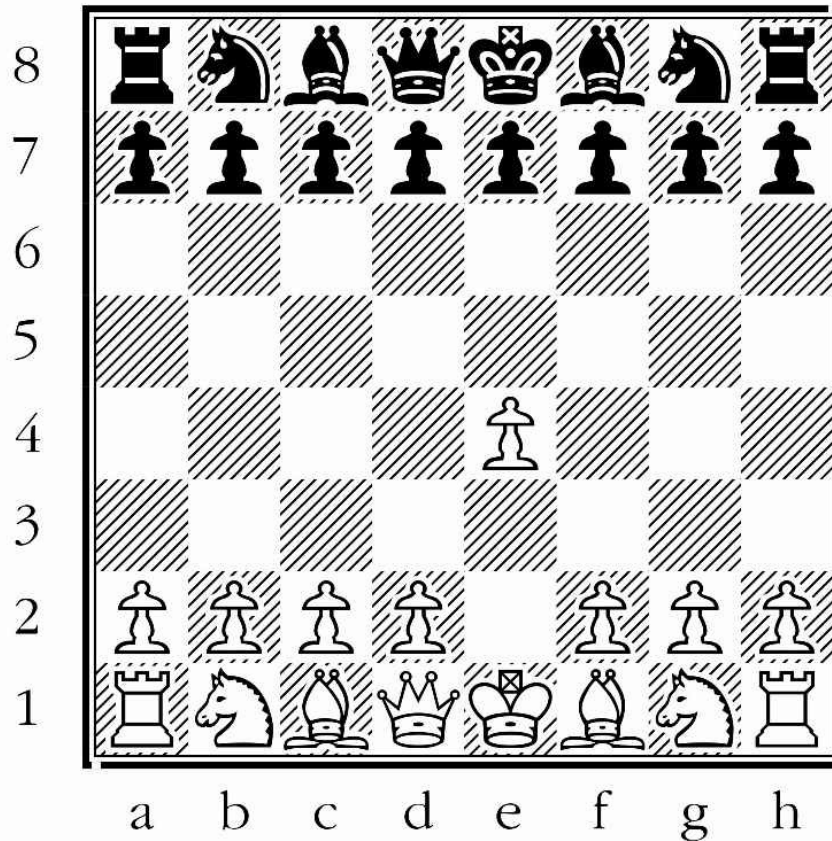
Notes

For proofreading and making suggestions on how to improve the book, I especially want to thank David Costantino. Levi Kaklauskas and Alan Bardwick also proofread and made important contributions to the book.

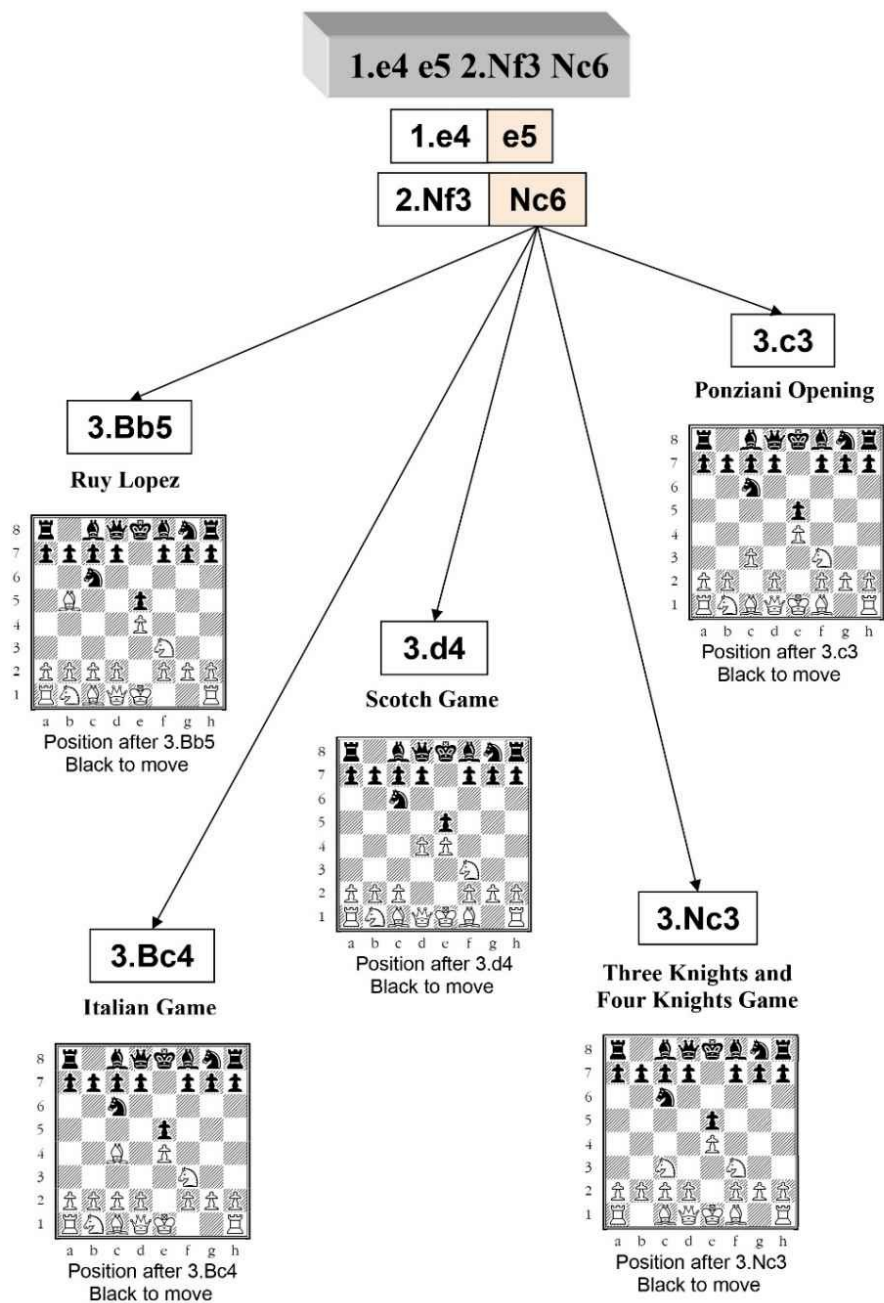
Best wishes in your chess endeavors,

Todd Bardwick
National Chess Master

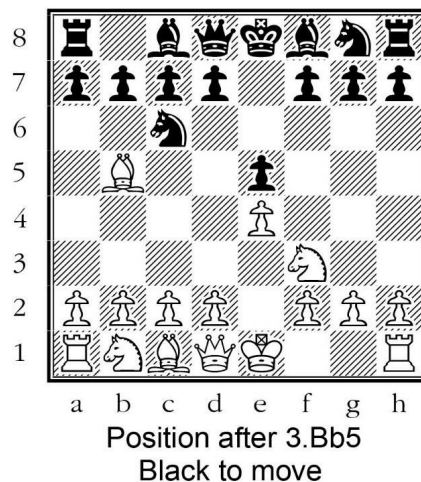
King's Pawn Openings



Position after 1.e4
Black to move



Ruy Lopez



The Ruy Lopez, **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5**, also called the Spanish Opening or Spanish Game, is one of the oldest openings that dates back to the 15th century and today is one of the most popular and heavily analyzed openings.

It is named after the 16th century Spanish priest, Ruy López de Segura, who made a systematic study of it in his 1561 book, *Libro del Ajedrez*.

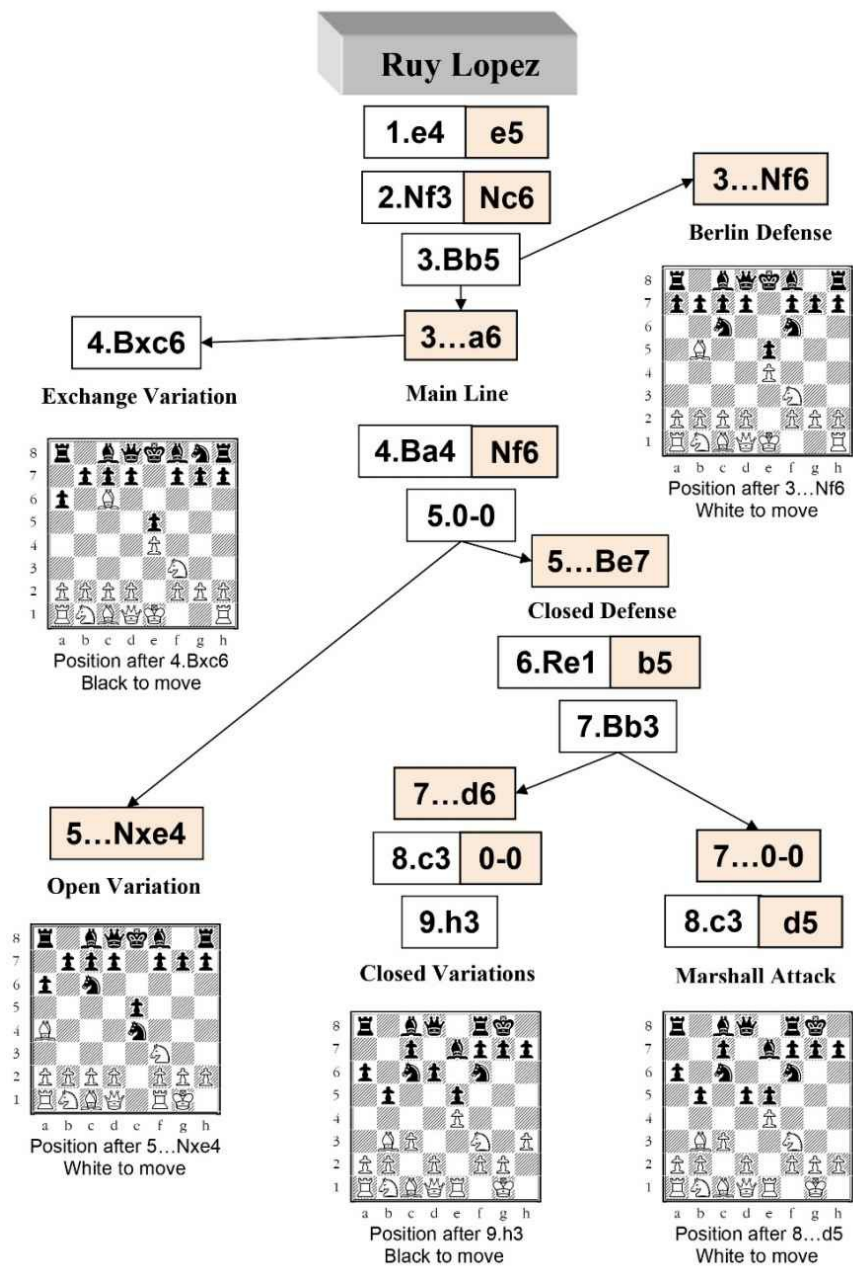
Since the opening has evolved and been studied for some five hundred years, many of the main variations are long and complex.

White's third move develops the bishop and prepares to castle, while attacking the knight on c6, which defends the e5 pawn.

Black's most common response is 3...a6 with the idea of playing ...b5 after the bishop retreats to a4.

After 3...a6, White can choose between the Exchange Variation, 4.Bxc6, and the Main Line, 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.O-O.

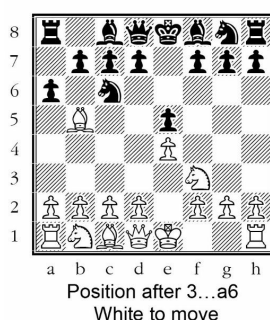
Black can also play the Berlin Defense, 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6.



3...a6

After **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5**, Black's most common reply is **3...a6**, sometimes called the Morphy Defense named after the first unofficial World Champion, Paul Morphy.

3...a6 forces the bishop to either capture the knight or retreat, typically to a4 (Main Line).



4.Bxc6

4.Bxc6, giving up the bishop pair to double Black's pawns on the c-file, is called the Exchange Variation.

4...dxc6 capturing away from the center to free the light-squared bishop and open the d-file. White's plan is to obtain a kingside pawn majority by playing d4 and exchanging that pawn for Black's e5 pawn.

5.0-0 5.d4 and 5.Nc3 are other options for White.

5...f6 Alternatives for Black are 5...Bg4, 5...Qf6, 5...Qd6, and 5...Bd6.

6.d4 exd4 Black can also play 6...Bg4 7.dxe5 Qxd1 8.Rxd1 fxe5.

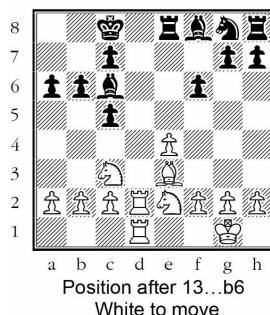
7.Nxd4 c5 8.Ne2 8.Nb3 is an alternative for White.

8...Qxd1 9.Rxd1 Bd7 10.Nbc3 White can also develop the bishop with 10.Be3 or 10.Bf4.

10...0-0-0 11.Be3 Re8 Black can also play 11...b6 or

11...Bd6.

12.Rd2 Bc6 13.Rad1 b6



The players castled on opposite sides.

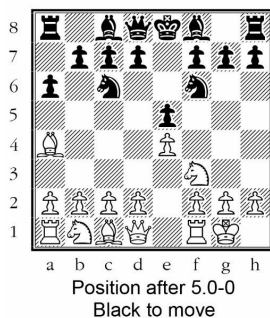
White has a superior pawn structure and control of the open d-file.

Black has the bishop pair but needs to develop the kingside pieces.

4.Ba4

4...Nf6 The Modern Steinitz Defense is 4...d6 5.c3 Bd7. Also playable for Black are 4...Nge7, 4...b5, and 4...g6.

5.0-0 White can also play 5.d3, 5.d4, 5.Qe2, or 5.Bxc6.



Black's main choice is between the Open Variation, 5...

Nxe4, and the more popular Closed Defense, 5...Be7.

Black can also play 5...b5 6.Bb3 Bc5 7.c3 d6 8.d4 Bb6 9.a4 Rb8 10.axb5 axb5.

Open Variation

5...Nxe4 6.d4 attacking the e5 pawn in an attempt to open the e-file to attack Black's uncastled king.

6...b5 7.Bb3 d5 occupying a center square with a pawn, blocking White's bishop on the a2-g8 diagonal, and supporting the knight on e4.

8.dxe5 Be6 9.Nbd2 White can also play 9.c3, 9.Be3, or 9.Qe2.

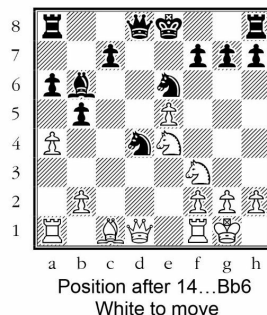
9...Nc5 Black can also develop the dark-squared bishop with 9...Be7 or 9...Bc5.

10.c3 d4 Alternatives for Black are 10...Be7, 10...Bg4, 10...Nxb3, 10...g6, and 10...Bf5.

11.Bxe6 Nxe6 12.cxd4 Ncxd4 13.a4 Alternatives for White are 13.Ne4 and 13.Nxd4.

13...Bc5 Another line for Black is 13...Bb4 14.axb5 Nxb5 15.Qa4 Bxd2 16.Bxd2 0-0.

14.Ne4 Bb6



The pawn structure is asymmetrical with White having a pawn majority on the kingside and Black on the queenside.

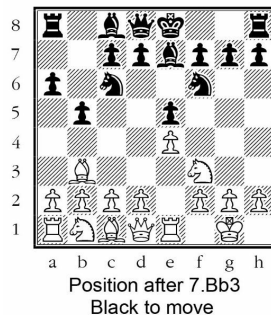
Black needs to castle and White needs to develop the bishop on c1.

A possible continuation is 15.Nfg5 Qd5 16.Re1 0-0.

Closed Defense

5...Be7 6.Re1 protecting the e4 pawn. An alternative variation for White is 6.d3 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.a4.

6...b5 7.Bb3 This is one of the most theoretically analyzed opening positions in chess.



Black can play 7...d6 heading into the Closed Variations or 7...0-0 leading to the Marshall Attack.

7...d6

8.c3 0-0 9.h3 to prevent Black's bishop from pinning the knight on g4. Another variation White can play is 9.d4 Bg4 10.Be3 exd4 11.cxd4 Na5 12.Bc2.

9...Na5 is Black's most common response, called the Chigorin Variation named after Russian chess player Mikhail Chigorin who lost two World Championship matches in the late 19th century to the 1st World Champion Wilhelm Steinitz.

9...Nb8 is called the Breyer Variation, named for the 1912 Hungarian Chess Champion Gyula Breyer. A sample continuation is 10.d4 Nbd7 11.Nbd2 Bb7 12.Bc2 Re8 13.Nf1 Bf8 14.Ng3 g6 15.a4 c5 16.d5 c4.

9...Bb7, called the Fianchetto Variation, may continue 10.d4 Re8 11.Nbd2 Bf8 12.d5 Nb8 13.Nf1 Nbd7 14.N3g2 Nc5 15.Bc2 c6.

10.Bc2 c5 11.d4 Qc7 11...Nd7 12.Nbd2 exd4 13.cxd4 Nc6 14.d5 Nce5 is an alternative for Black.

12.Nbd2 cxd4 12...Nc6 and **12...Bd7** are playable.

13.cxd4 Nc6 14.Nb3 a5 15.Be3 a4 16.Nbd2 Bd7 17.Rc1 Qb7 18.Qe2 connecting the rooks and intending to play Bd3.



Both players are safely castled kingside.

Black has more space on the queenside.

A battle will likely take place on the open c-file and sometimes the d-file if White trades pawns on e5.

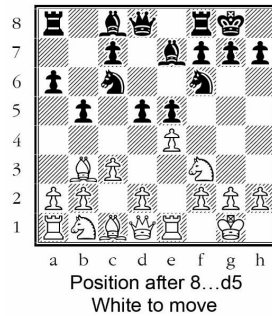
7...0-0

8.c3 White can keep the position closed with ideas like 8.h3 Bb7 9.d3 d6 10.a3 Qd7 11.Nc3 Rfe8 12.Bg5 or 8.a4 b4 9.d3 d6 10.Nbd2 Na5 11.Ba2 c5 12.c3 Rb8 13.Nc4.

8...d5 is the aggressive Marshall Attack introduced by U.S. Chess Champion Frank Marshall against Capablanca in 1918, where Black sacrifices a pawn for an attack on White's king.

Black's pieces develop quickly while White's queenside pieces are slow to enter the game.

Black can also play 8...d6 9.h3 Na5 10.Be2 c5.



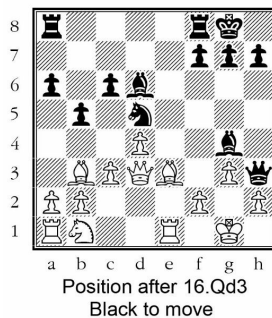
9.exd5 White can refuse the gambit pawn and play 9.d4 exd4 10.e5 Ne4 11.cxd4 Bf5 12.Nc3 Nxc3 13.bxc3.

9...Nxd5 10.Nxe5 Nxe5 11.Rxe5 White is a pawn ahead but hasn't developed the queenside pieces.

11...c6 12.d4 White can also play 12.d3, 12.Bxd5, 12.g3, or 12.Re1.

12...Bd6 13.Re1 Qh4 14.g3 Qh3 15.Be3 Alternatives for White are 15.Re4, 15.Qe2, and 15.Qf3.

15...Bg4 16.Qd3



Black has attacking chances against the White king and can

continue the attack with either 16...Rae8 developing the final piece or 16...f5 threatening 17...f4.

White is ahead by a pawn and plans on developing the knight to d2.

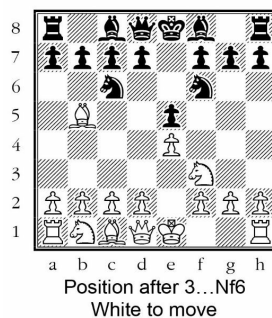
White's queen often retreats to f1 to help defend the king.

Complicated tactical positions ensue.

Berlin Defense

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 is called the Berlin Defense. Also referred to as the Berlin Wall since it is hard to breach, the Berlin Defense was popularized in the late 19th and early 20th century by the 2nd World Champion Emanuel Lasker.

Less popular third move variants for Black are 3...f5, 3...Nge7, 3...Bc5, 3...g6, and 3...Nd4.



4.0-0 White can avoid the main line of the Berlin Defense with an idea like 4.d3 Bc5 5.c3 0-0 6.0-0 d6 7.Nbd2.

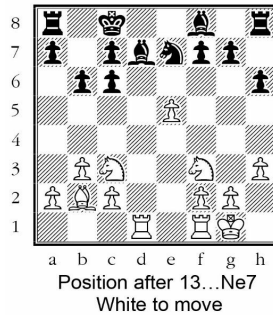
4...Nxe4 Another line for Black is 4...Bc5 5.Nxe5 Nxe4 6.Qe2 Nxe5 7.Qxe4 Qe7 8.d4 Nc6 9.Qxe7+ Bxe7.

5.d4 An alternative line is 5.Re1 Nd6 6.Nxe5 Be7 7.Bf1

Nxe5 8.Rxe5 0-0 9.d4 Bf6 10.Re1.

5...Nd6 6.Bxc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 Nf5 8.Qxd8+ Kxd8 9.Nc3 Bd7 Black can also move the king back toward the kingside with 9...Ke8 10.h3 h5 11.Bg5 Be6 12.Rfd1 Be7.

10.h3 h6 11.b3 Kc8 12.Bb2 b6 13.Rad1 Ne7



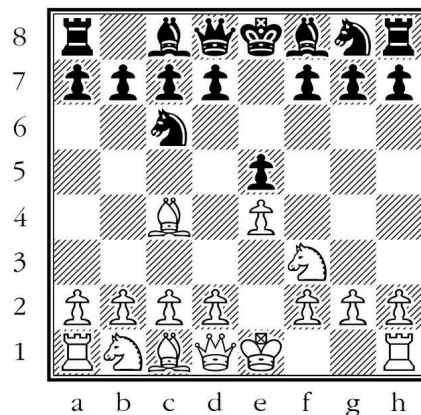
White has a better pawn structure, a lead in development, and control of the center.

White would like to advance the kingside pawns with a four vs. three pawn majority in an attempt to gain space and create a passed pawn.

Black has the bishop pair that will increase in strength as pieces trade.

Black can develop the a8 rook toward the center after ...c5, ...Bc6, and ...Kb7.

Italian Game



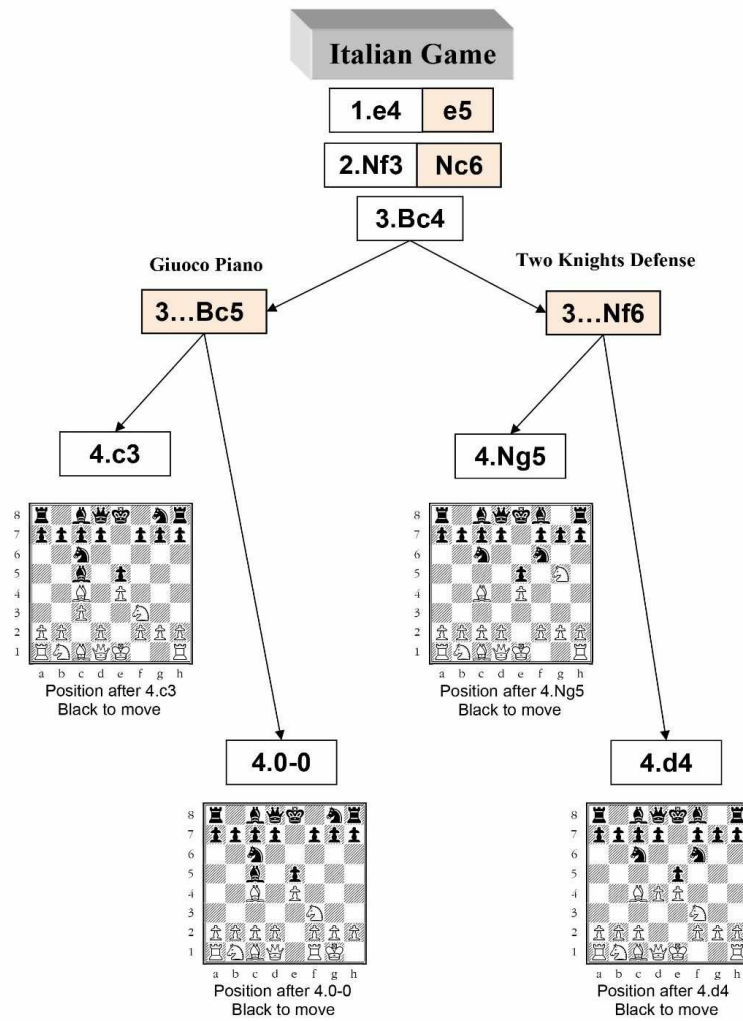
Position after 3.Bc4
Black to move

The Italian Game is the family of openings starting with **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4**.

It is one of the oldest recorded chess openings, developed by Pedro Damiano and Giulio Polerio in the 16th century and Gioachino Greco in 1620. The Italian Game has been extensively analyzed for the last 400 years.

White develops the kingside bishop to c4 where it attacks the vulnerable f7 square.

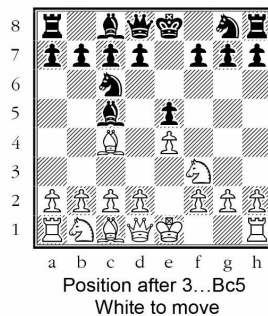
Black's two main responses to the Italian Game are the Giuoco Piano, 3...Bc5, and the Two Knights Defense, 3...Nf6.



Giuoco Piano

The Giuoco Piano, meaning “Quiet Game” in Italian, begins **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5**.

Black develops the bishop and challenges White’s control of the center d4 square.



White’s main responses are 4.c3 (to prepare 5.d4) and 4.0-0.

4.c3

4...Nf6 4...Qe7 5.0-0 d6 6.d4 Bb6 is the Closed Variation.

5.d4 5.d3 transposes into the quieter Giuoco Pianissimo.

5...exd4 6.cxd4 An alternative for White is **6.e5 d5 7.Bb5 Ne4 8.cxd4 Bb6 9.Nc3 0-0 10.Be3 Ne7 11.0-0 c6 12.Bd3**.

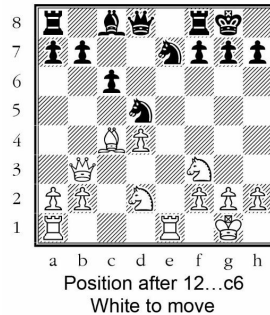
6...Bb4+ 7.Bd2 7.Nc3 sacrificing a pawn for a lead in development is the Møller Attack, which might continue **7...Nxe4 8.0-0 Bxc3 9.d5 Bf6 10.Re1 Ne7 11.Rxe4**.

7...Bxd2+ 7...Nxe4 8.Bxb4 Nxb4 9.Bxf7+ Kxf7 10.Qb3+ Kf8 11.Qxb4+ Qe7 12.Qxe7+ Kxe7.

8.Nbxd2 d5 9.exd5 Nxd5 10.Qb3 An alternative line is **10.0-0 0-0 11.Rc1 Nb6 12.Bb3**.

10...Nce7 10...Na5 11.Qa4+ Nc6 12.Bb5 Qe7+ 13.Ne5

Bd7 14.0-0 Nxe5 is another option for Black.
11.0-0 0-0 12.Rfe1 c6



Both players are safely castled.

White has a lead in development but an isolated pawn on d4.

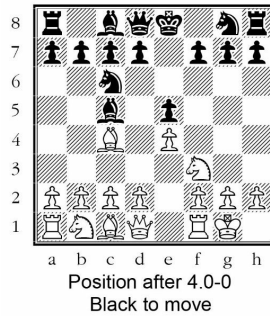
Black needs to develop the queenside bishop and rook.

4.0-0

White castles quickly, not committing to a specific plan in the center.

4.d3 Nf6 5.c3 results in a more closed position called the Giuoco Pianissimo.

The aggressive Evans Gambit is 4.b4. A sample continuation is 4...Bxb4 5.c3 Ba5 6.d4 exd4 7.0-0 Nge7 8.cxd4 d5 9.exd5 Nxd5 10.Ba3.



4...Nf6 Black can also play 4...d6 5.c3 Nf6 6.d4 Bb6 7.a4 a6 8.dxe5 Nxe5 9.Nxe5 dxe5.

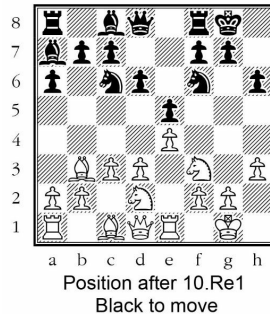
5.d3 An alternative line for White is 5.d4 Bxd4 (5...exd4 6.e5 is the Max Lange Attack) 6.Nxd4 Nxd4 7.f4 d6 8.fxe5 dxe5 9.Bg5 Qe7 10.Na3 Be6 11.c3 Bxc4 12.Bxf6 gxf6 13.Nxc4.

5...d6 6.c3 supporting a pawn push to d4.

6...a6 clearing the a7 square for the bishop.

7.Bb3 Ba7 8.Nbd2 0-0 9.h3 to keep Black's minor pieces off g4.

9...h6 10.Re1



Both players are safely castled.

White can move the knight to f1 and then g3 or leave it on f1 to support the c1 bishop moving to e3.

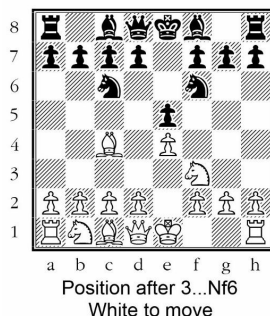
The game is fairly balanced with no pieces traded.

Both players need to develop the queenside bishops and rooks.

Two Knights Defense

The Two Knights Defense, **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6**, is a more aggressive response to the Italian Game than the Giuoco Piano.

The Hungarian Defense, **3...Be7**, is an alternative for Black that avoids the complexity of the Giuoco Piano or Two Knights Defense. A sample line is **4.d4 d6 5.h3 Nf6 6.Nc3 0-0 7.0-0**.



White can attack the pawn on f7 with **4.Ng5** or play in the center with **4.d4**.

4.Ng5

4...d5 The Wilkes-Barre/Traxler Variation is **4...Bc5 5.Bxf7+ (5.Nxf7 Bxf2+ 6.Kf1) 5...Ke7 6.Bb3**.

5.exd5 Na5 If **5...Nxd5**, White can play **6.d4** or the Fried Liver Attack where White sacrifices the knight with **6.Nxf7 Kxf7 7.Qf3+ Ke6 8.Nc3 Nb4 9.Qe4 c6 10.a3 Na6 5...b5** and

5...Nd4 are other options for Black.

6.Bb5+ c6 Black can also play 6...Bd7 7.Qe2 Be7.

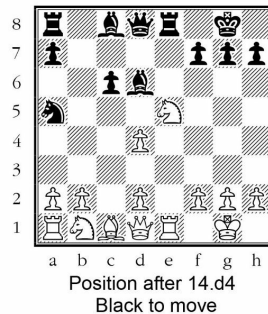
7.dxc6 bxc6 8.Bd3 White can also play 8.Qf3 or 8.Be2 h6 9.Nf3 e4 10.Ne5 Bd6 11.d4 exd3 12.Nxd3 Qc7 13.b3 0-0 14.Bb2.

8...Nd5 9.Nf3 Another option for White is the aggressive 9.h4.

9...Bd6 10.0-0 Nf4 Another variation for Black is 10...0-0 11.Re1 Re8 12.Nc3 f5 13.Nxd5 cxd5 14.Bb5 Bd7 15.Bxd7 Qxd7.

11.Re1 Nxd3 12.cxd3 0-0 13.Nxe5 An alternative for White is 13.Nc3.

13...Re8 14.d4



Both players are safely castled.

White has extra doubled, isolated pawns on the d-file but an undeveloped queenside.

Black has a lead in development and the bishop pair for the two pawn material deficit.

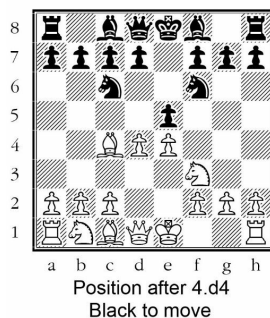
4.d4

After **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6**, White can seek rapid

development instead of material by playing **4.d4**.

White can also play positionally and avoid tactical variations by playing the quiet 4.d3 Be7 5.0-0 0-0 6.Re1 d6 7.a4 Na5 8.Ba2 c5 9.Nc3 Nc6 10.Nd5.

Other options for White are 4.Nc3 or 4.0-0.



4...exd4 5.e5 White can also play 5.0-0, after which 5... Bc5 6.e5 d5 7.exf6 dxc4 is the complicated and tactical Max Lange Attack which can also arise from the Giuoco Piano, Scotch Gambit, Petroff Defense, Bishop's Opening, or Center Game.

After 5.0-0, Black can also play 5...Nxe4 6.Re1 (6.Nc3 dxc3 7.Bxf7+ Kxf7 8.Qd5+ is the Nakhmanson Gambit where White sacrificed a pawn, knight, and bishop for a potentially deadly attack on Black's king.) 6...d5 7.Bxd5 Qxd5 8.Nc3 Qh5 9.Nxe4 Be6.

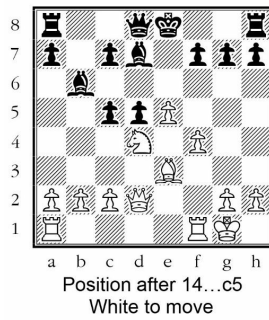
5...d5 Black can also play 5...Ng4 or 5...Ne4.

6.Bb5 Ne4 6...Nd7 7.0-0 Be7 8.Re1 0-0 is another variation for Black.

7.Nxd4 Bd7 Black can also play 7...Bc5.

8.Bxc6 bxc6 9.0-0 Bc5 10.f3 Another choice for White is 10.Be3.

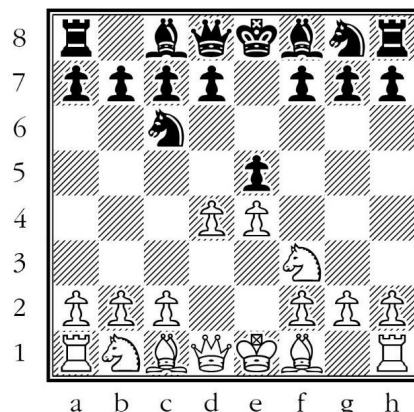
10...Ng5 11.f4 Ne4 12.Be3 Bb6 13.Nd2 Nxd2 14.Qxd2 c5 forcing White's knight to retreat.



White is better developed and has more space on the kingside.

Black plans to castle kingside, expand in the center, and open up the position for the bishop pair.

Scotch Game



Position after 3.d4
Black to move

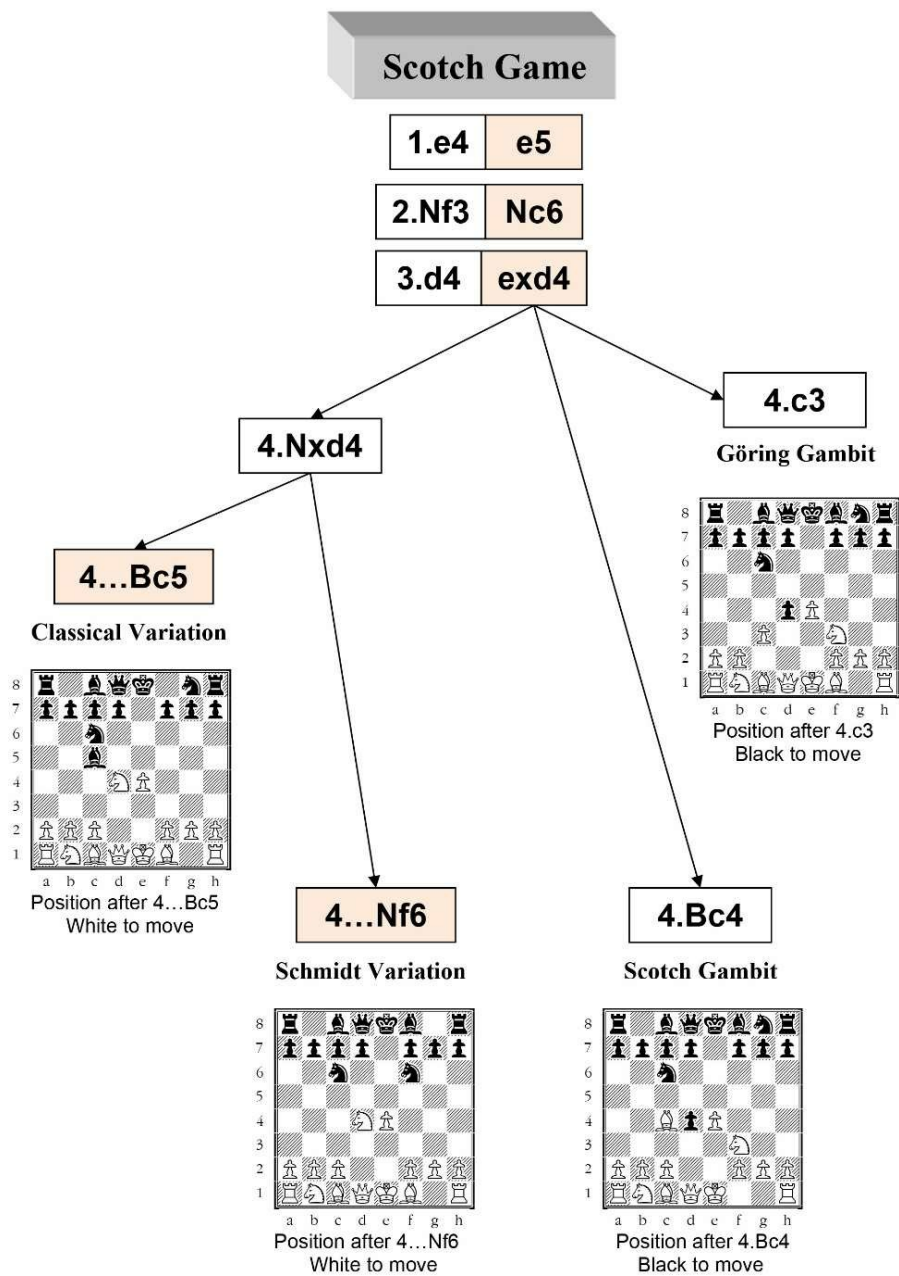
The Scotch Game, **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4**, received its name from the correspondence match in 1824 between cities of London and Edinburgh, Scotland.

White attempts to dominate the center with 3.d4, eliminating Black's e5 center pawn.

The game usually continues 3...exd4 4.Nxd4.

Black's two main lines in the Scotch Game are the Classical Variation, 4...Bc5, and the Schmidt Variation, 4...Nf6.

After 3...exd4, White also has the option of playing the Scotch Gambit, 4.Bc4, or the Göring Gambit, 4.c3.



Classical Variation

In the Classical Variation, **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4 Bc5**, Black develops the dark-squared bishop to attack the d4 knight.

Developing the dark-squared bishop with 4...Bb4+ is an alternative move for Black. The game could continue 5.c3 Bc5 6.Be3 Bb6 7.Nf5 g6 8.Bxb6 axb6 9.Ne3 Nf6 10.f3 0-0.



5.Be3 White can also play **5.Nxc6 Qf6 6.Qf3 bxc6 7.Nd2 d6 8.Nb3 Bb6 9.Bd2** or **5.Nb3 Bb6 6.Nc3 Nf6 7.Qe2 0-0 8.Bg5**.

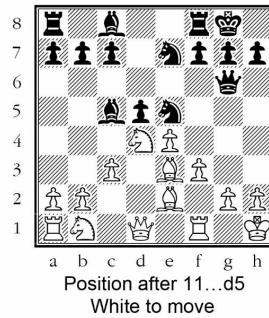
5...Qf6 6.c3 Nge7 After 6...Qg6, 7.Qf3 defends both the e4 and g2 pawns. With the g2 pawn protected, White's light-squared bishop can develop.

7.Bc4 White can also play 7.Qd2, 7.g3, or 7.Nc2.

7...Ne5 8.Be2 Qg6 8...d5 is an alternative line for Black.

9.0-0 d6 10.f3 White can sacrifice a pawn by playing **10.f4 Qxe4 11.Bf2 Bxd4 12.cxd4 N5g6 13.g3 Bh3 14.Bf3 Qf5 15.Re1 d5 16.Qb3**.

10...0-0 11.Kh1 d5 challenging White's center.



Both players are safely castled and plan to bring the rooks on the a-file toward the center for the ensuing battle.

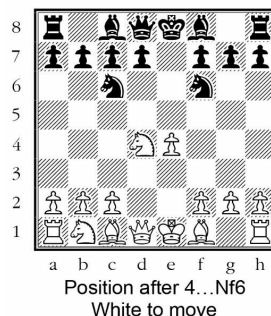
White can develop the queenside knight to d2 to defend the pawn on e4.

Black needs to develop the queenside bishop and rook.

Schmidt Variation

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 is called the Schmidt Variation named after 20th century Estonian International Master, writer, and chemist Paul Schmidt.

Rarer alternatives for Black are 4...Nge7, 4...Qf6, 4...Qh4, 4...g6, 4...d6, and 4...Nxd4.



5.Nxc6 The main alternative for White is 5.Nc3 Bb4 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.Bd3 d5 8.exd5 cxd5 9.0-0 0-0 10.Bg5 c6 11.Qf3.

5...bxc6 6.e5 White can also play 6.Bd3 d5 7.exd5 cxd5 8.0-0 Be7 9.c4.

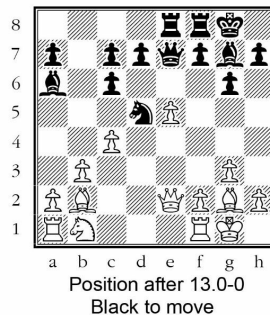
6...Qe7 7.Qe2 Nd5 8.c4 8.Nd2 g6 9.c4 Ba6 10.Nf3 Qb4+ 11.Kd1 is another variation White can choose.

8...Ba6 An alternative line for Black is 8...Nb6 9.Nc3 Qe6 10.Qe4 g6 11.f4 d5.

9.b3 g6 9...0-0-0 10.g3 g5 11.Bb2 Bg7 12.Nd2 Nb4 is another possible variation for Black.

10.g3 White can also support the e5 pawn with 10.f4.

10...Bg7 11.Bb2 0-0 12.Bg2 Rae8 13.0-0



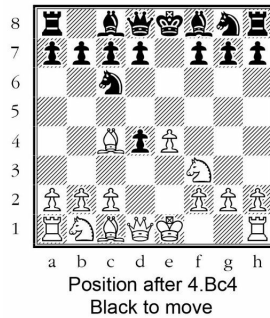
Both players are safely castled kingside, with Black's development completed.

White needs to develop the queenside knight and rook.

Black can play 13...Nb6 to save the knight or play the capture sequence 13...Bxe5 14.Qxe5 Qxe5 15.Bxe5 Rxe5 16.cxd5 Bxf1 17.Kf1 cxd5 resulting in a material imbalance where White has a bishop and knight for a rook and two pawns.

Scotch Gambit

After **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4**, the Scotch Gambit is **4.Bc4**, developing the bishop and taking aim at the vulnerable f7 square.



4...Bc5 reinforcing the d4 pawn and developing a piece. Black can also transpose into the Two Knights Defense with **4...Nf6**. Other moves for Black are **4...Be7** and **4...d6**.

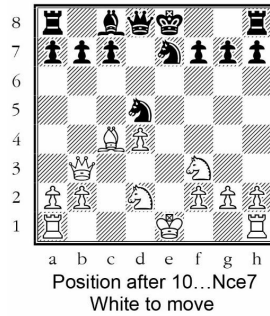
5.c3 An alternative forcing line is **5.Ng5 Nh6 6.Nxf7 Nxf7 7.Bxf7+ Kxf7 8.Qh5+ g6 9.Qxc5**.

5...Nf6 Black can accept the gambit at the cost of falling behind in development and not being able to castle after **5...dxc3 6.Bxf7+ Kxf7 7.Qxd5+ followed by 8.Qxc5**.

6.cxd4 6.e5 d5 7.Bb5 Ne4 8.cxd4 Bb6 9.Nc3 0-0 10.Be3 is another variation White can choose.

6...Bb4+ 7.Bd2 Bxd2+ 8.Nbxd2 d5 9.exd5 Nxd5 10.Qb3 developing the queen and taking aim at the b7 and f7 pawns.

10...Nce7



Both players plan to castle kingside.

White has a lead in development but an isolated pawn on d4.

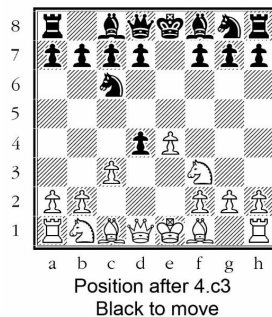
Black can support the knight on d5 by advancing the c-pawn to c6.

Göring Gambit

After **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4, 4.c3** is the Göring Gambit named for the 19th century German chess master Carl Göring.

White offers a pawn to develop quickly with the hope of gaining an immediate initiative.

The pawn structure in the Göring Gambit is similar to that of the Danish Gambit.



4...dxc3 capturing the pawn and challenging White to show compensation for it. Black can refuse the pawn and play 4...d5 5.exd5 Qxd5 6.cxd4 Bg4 7.Be2 Bb4+ 8.Nc3 Bxf3 9.Bxf3 Qc4 10.Qb3 Qxb3 11.axb3 Nge7 resulting in White having the bishop pair to counterbalance the isolated pawns. Black can also refuse the gambit by playing 4...d3 or 4...Nf6.

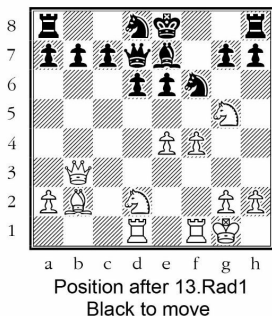
5.Bc4 offering a second pawn. White can also play 5.Nxc3 Bb4 6.Bc4 d6 7.0-0 Bxc3 8.bxc3 Nf6 9.e5 Nxe5 10.Nxe5 dxe5 11.Qb3 with piece activity and the bishop pair for the sacrificed pawns.

5...cxb2 accepting a second pawn. Black can decline the second pawn by playing 5...d6 6.Nxc3 Nf6.

6.Bxb2 d6 An aggressive alternative for Black is 6...Bb4+ 7.Nc3 Nf6 8.e5 Qe7.

7.0-0 Be6 challenging White's bishop on the a2-g8 diagonal.

8.Bxe6 fxe6 9.Qb3 Qd7 10.Ng5 Nd8 11.f4 Nf6 12.Nd2 Be7 13.Rad1

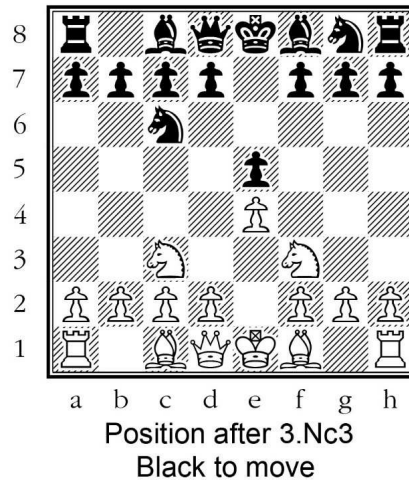


White has a safely castled king, space advantage, lead in development, and active pieces in return for the sacrificed pawns.

Black would like to trade pieces and safeguard the king.

A possible continuation is 13...h6 14.e5 hxg5 15.exf6 Bxf6 16.fxg5 Bxb2 17.Qxb2.

Three Knights and Four Knights Game



The Three Knights Game usually starts with **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3** although the moves can be transposed with **1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Nf3**.

The Four Knights Game, where Black plays 3...Nf6, is Black's most commonly played third move. White can then choose between 4.Bb5, the Spanish Variation, and 4.d4, the Scotch Variation.

The most common third move for Black in the Three Knights Game is 3...g6.

Three Knights and Four Knights Game

1.e4

e5

2.Nf3

Nc6

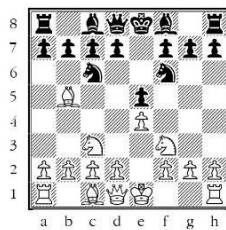
3.Nc3

3...Nf6

3...g6

4.Bb5

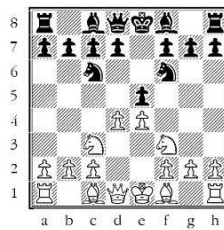
**Four Knights Game
Spanish Variation**



Position after 4.Bb5
Black to move

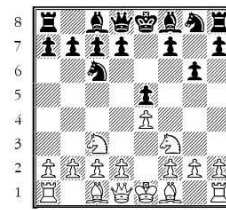
4.d4

**Four Knights Game
Scotch Variation**



Position after 4.d4
Black to move

Three Knights Game

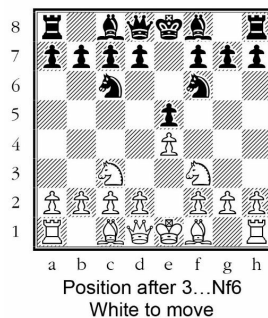


Position after 3...g6
White to move

Four Knights Game

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 is the Four Knights Game. The opening is popular with beginners as Black follows the general opening rule “knights before bishops”.

Due to the symmetry of the position, the opening is considered a safe, drawish opening choice for Black.



White's most common responses are the Spanish Variation, 4.Bb5, and the Scotch Variation, 4.d4.

Spanish Variation

4.Bb5 is the Spanish Variation. This position can also be reached from the Berlin Defense variation of the Ruy Lopez.

4...Bb4 4...Nd4 is an alternative for Black. The game could continue 5.Nxd4 exd4 6.e5 dxc3 7.exf6 Qxf6 8.dxc3 Qe5+ 9.Qe2 Qxe2+ 10.Bxe2 d5. Another variation is 4...Bc5 5.0-0 0-0 6.Nxe5 Nxe5 7.d4 Bd6 8.f4 Nc6 9.e5 Be7.

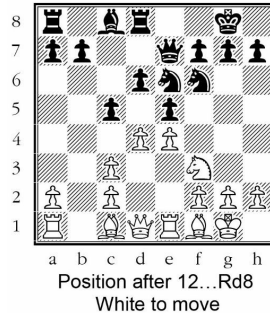
5.0-0 0-0 6.d3 White can also play 6.Bxc6 dxc6 7.Nxe5 Re8 8.Nd3 Bxc3 9.dxc3 Nxe4 10.Qf3.

6...d6 7.Bg5 threatening 8.Nd5 to attack the pinned knight on f6.

7...Bxc3 8.bxc3 Qe7 An alternative for Black is 8...h6

9.Bh4 Bd7.

9.Re1 Nd8 10.d4 Ne6 11.Bc1 c5 12.Bf1 Rd8



Both players are safely castled.

With the bishop pair, White would like to open the center,
while Black would like to keep it closed.

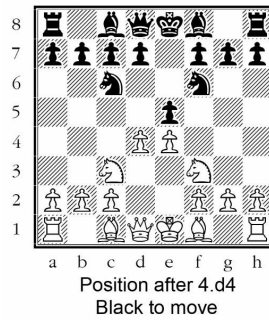
Black has a better pawn structure and doesn't want to capture
on d4 allowing White to undouble the c-pawns.

Both players need to develop the queenside rook and bishop.

Scotch Variation

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.d4, leading to a more
open position, is called the Scotch Variation of the Four
Knights Game.

Another line White can play is **4.g3 d5 5.exd5 Nxd5**
6.Bg2 Nxc3 7.bxc3 Bd6 8.0-0 0-0 9.Rb1 Rb8 10.d4.



4...exd4 Black can also play 4...Bb4 5.Nxe5 Qe7 6.Qd3 Nxe5 7.dxe5 Qxe5 8.Bd2 0-0. After 4...Bb4, White may choose to close the center with 5.d5.

5.Nxd4 5.Nd5 is called the Belgrade Gambit. An open tactical position occurs if Black accepts the gambit with 5...Nxe4 6.Bc4 Be7 7.Nxd4 0-0 8.Nb5 Bc5 9.0-0 Nxf2 10.Qh5. Black can decline the gambit by playing 5...Be7 6.Bf4 d6 7.Nxd4 0-0 8.Nb5 Nxd5 9.exd5 Ne5.

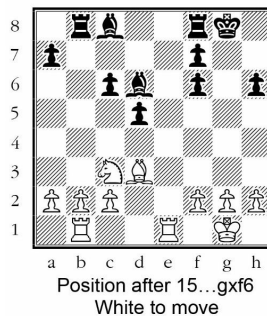
5...Bb4 An alternative for Black is 5...Bc5 6.Be3 Bb6 7.Qd2 0-0.

6.Nxc6 to double Black's c-pawns.

6...bxc6 7.Bd3 d5 8.exd5 cxd5 9.0-0 0-0 10.Bg5 c6 11.Qf3 putting pressure on the pinned knight and connecting the rooks.

11...Bd6 Black can protect the knight and break the pin with 11...Be7. The game could continue 12.Rfe1 Re8 13.h3 h6 14.Bf4 Be6.

12.Rfe1 Rb8 13.Rab1 h6 14.Bxf6 Qxf6 15.Qxf6 gxf6



Black has the bishop pair but also four isolated pawns that are potential targets for White to attack.

With the queens and two sets of minor pieces off the board, both kings should be safe in the middlegame.

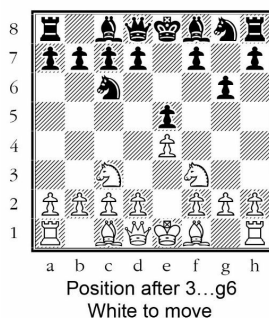
3...g6

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 g6 is the Three Knights Game, the most common way for Black to break the symmetry and avoid the Four Knights Game.

Black can also play **3...Bb4 4.Nd5 Ba5 5.Bc4 Nf6** or **3...Bc5 4.Nxe5 Nxe5 5.d4 Bd6 6.dxe5 Bxe5**.

After **3...d6** or **3...Be7**, White can strike at the center with **4.d4**.

3...f5 can be met with **4.d4 fxe4 5.Nxe5**.



4.d4 exd4 5.Nd5 Another line White can consider is **5.Nxd4 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Nxc6 bxc6 8.e5 Ng8 9.Bd4 Qe7 10.Qe2 f6 11.exf6 Nxf6**.

5...Bg7 6.Bg5 Nce7 7.Nxd4 h6 Black can also consider **7...c6 8.Nxe7 Nxe7 9.Qd2 h6 10.Bh4 d5 11.0-0 0-0**.

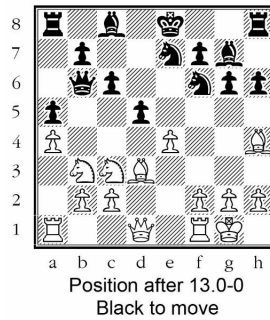
8.Bh4 c6 9.Nc3 Qb6 10.Nb3 a5 Black can also play in

the center with 10...d5 11.Bd3 Be6.

11.a4 preventing Black from playing 11...a4.

11...d5 challenging White for control of the center.

12.Bd3 Nf6 13.0-0

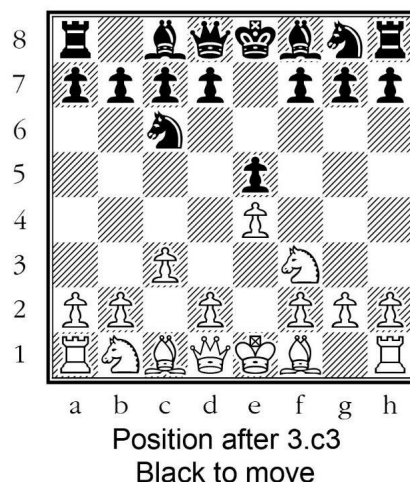


White's king is safely castled.

Black plans on castling kingside and needs to develop the light-squared bishop.

The battle will take place in the center.

Ponziani Opening



The Ponziani Opening, **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.c3**, is named for 18th century Italian priest and law professor Domenico Ponziani. White prepares 4.d4 to control the center with pawns.

3...Nf6 Black can also play 3...d5 4.Qa4 Bd7 5.exd5 Nd4 6.Qd1 Nxf3+ 7.Qxf3 Nf6 8.Bc4 e4 9.Qe2 Bd6.

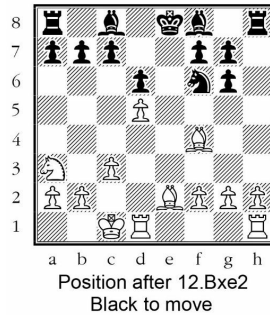
4.d4 Another variation is 4.d3 d5 5.Nbd2 a5 6.Be2.

4...Nxe4 Alternatives for Black are 4...exd4 5.e5 Nd5 and 4...d6 5.Bb5 Bd7.

5.d5 Ne7 6.Nxe5 Ng6 7.Nxg6 White can also play 7.Qf3, 7.Qd4, or 7.Qe2.

7...hxxg6 8.Qe2 Qe7 9.Bf4 d6 10.Na3 Nf6 Black can also play 10...g5, 10...a6, 10...Bd7, 10...Bf5, 10...Rh5, or 10...Nc5.

11.0-0-0 Qxe2 12.Bxe2



White has more space and active bishops. White threatens Nb5 and Rhe1.

Black needs to develop the bishops and decide which part of the board is safest for the king.

Black can play 12...Be7 or develop the queenside bishop to g4, f5, or d7.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3

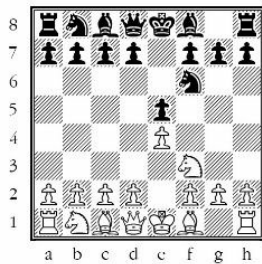
1.e4

e5

2.Nf3

2...Nf6

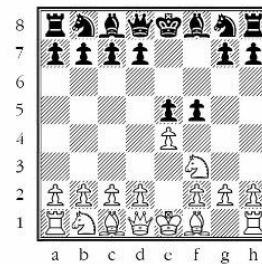
Petroff Defense



Position after 2...Nf6
White to move

2...f5

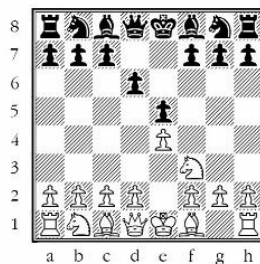
Latvian Gambit



Position after 2...f5
White to move

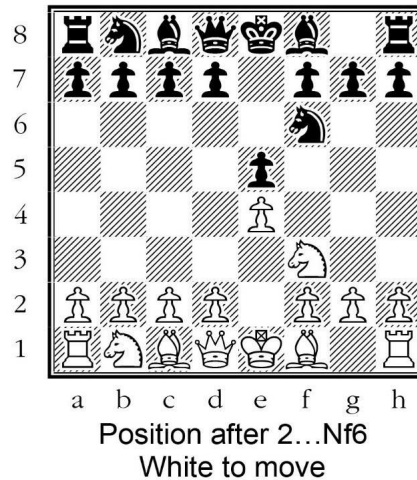
2...d6

Philidor Defense



Position after 2...d6
White to move

Petroff Defense



The Petroff Defense, **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6**, is named after Russian chess player Alexander Petrov, who was one of Russia's best players in the 19th century.

The opening is also known as Petrov's Defense and the Russian Defense.

The Petroff Defense has a drawish reputation due to Black's symmetrical response on the second move, making it difficult for White to gain an advantage.

The Main Line or Classical Variation is 3.Nxe5.

White's main alternative is the Steinitz Attack, 3.d4.

White can also play 3.Nc3, the Three Knight's Game of the Petroff Defense.

Petroff Defense

1.e4

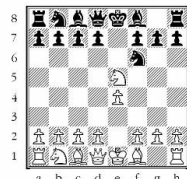
e5

2.Nf3

Nf6

3.Nxe5

Classical Variation



3.d4

Steinitz Attack



3.Nc3

Three Knights Game



Classical Variation

The Classical Variation of Petroff Defense is **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5**.



Black usually plays **3...d6** (The standard trap Black needs to avoid is 3...Nxe4 4.Qe2 Nf6? 5.Nc6+, winning Black's queen.)

4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.d4 White can also play 5.Nc3 or 5.Qe2.

5...d5 Black can also play 5...Be7 6.Bd3 Nf6 7.h3 0-0 8.0-0 Re8 9.c4 Nc6 10.Nc3 h6.

6.Bd3 White plans to undermine Black's knight on e4 with some combination of Bd3, c4, and Re1.

6...Nc6 Black can also play 6...Be7 7.0-0 Nc6 8.c4 Nb4 9.Be2 0-0 or 6...Bd6 7.0-0 0-0 8.c4 c6 9.Nc3 Nxc3 10.bxc3 dxc4 11.Bxc4 Bg4 12.h3 Bh5.

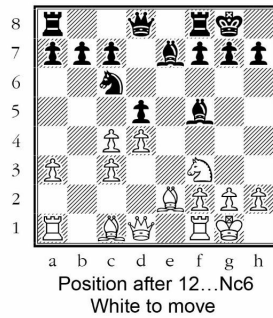
7.0-0 Be7 7...Bg4 is an option for Black.

8.c4 White can also choose between 8.Nc3 or 8.Re1.

8...Nb4 9.Be2 preserving the bishop pair.

9...0-0 10.Nc3 Bf5 10...Be6 is an alternative for Black.

11.a3 Nxc3 12.bxc3 Nc6



Both players are safely castled.

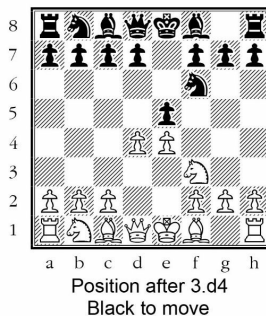
White can undouble the c-pawns by capturing on d5. Black can then recapture on d5 with the queen and may try to take control of c4 by playing ...Na5.

White usually develops the dark-squared bishop to f4.

The kingside rooks tend to gravitate to the open e-file.

Steinitz Attack

After **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6**, White can unbalance the position by playing the sharp **3.d4** called the Steinitz Attack, favored by the 1st World Champion from Austria, Wilhelm Steinitz.



3...Nxe4 A game with a symmetrical pawn structure arises after 3...exd4 4.e5 Ne4 5.Qxd4 d5 6.exd6 Nxd6 7.Nc3 Nc6 8.Qf4 Nf5 9.Bb5 Bd6.

4.Bd3 White can also play 4.dxe5 d5 5.Nbd2 Nc5 6.Nb3 Ne6 7.Nbd4 Nxd4 8.Nxd4.

4...d5 5.Nxe5 An alternative line is 5.dxe5 Nc5 6.Be2 Be7 7.0-0 0-0 8.Be3 c6.

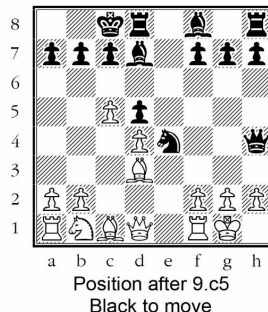
5...Nd7 challenging the knight on e5. Black can also play 5...Be7 6.0-0 0-0.

6.Nxd7 Bxd7 7.0-0 White can also play 7.Nc3 Nxc3 8.bxc3 Bd6 9.Qh5 Qe7+ 10.Be3.

7...Qh4 Another line for Black is 7...Bd6 8.c4 c6 9.cxd5 cxd5 10.Nc3 Nxc3 11.bxc3 0-0 12.Qh5 g6 13.Qxd5 Qc7 14.Qf3 Qxc3 15.Bh6 Rfe8 16.Qf6 Bf8 17.Bxf8 Rxf8.

8.c4 White can also play 8.g3.

8...0-0-0 9.c5



The players castled on opposite sides.

Black plans to attack on the kingside with ideas like ...g5 and fianchettoing the dark-squared bishop.

White plans to develop the knight to c3 to pressure Black's knight. White would like to attack Black's king possibly by advancing the a- and b- pawns.

The center might open up resulting in the battle taking place there.

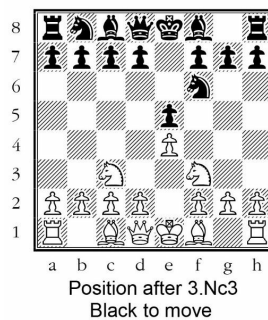
Three Knights Game

The Three Knights Game of the Petroff Defense is **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nc3.**

The same position can be reached in the Vienna Game after 1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Nf3.

3.Bc4 is the Italian Variation of the Petroff Defense. If Black captures the pawn with 3...Nxe4 4.Nc3 Nxc3 5.dxc3 f6, Black has an extra pawn, but the light squares on the kingside are weak.

After 3.Bc4, 3...Nc6 transposes into the Two Knights Defense of the Italian Game.

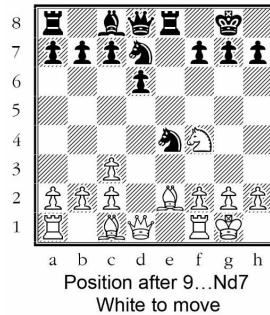


3...Bb4 Black can transpose into the Four Knights Game by playing 3...Nc6.

4.Nxe5 White can also play 4.Bc4 0-0 5.0-0.

4...0-0 5.Be2 White can also play 5.Nd3 Bxc3 6.dxc3 Nxe4 7.Be2 d5 8.0-0.

5...Re8 skewering the knight to the pawn.
 6.Nd3 Bxc3 7.dxc3 Nxe4 8.Nf4 d6 9.0-0 Nd7



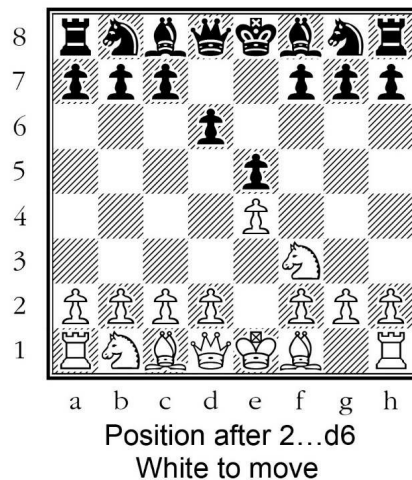
Both players are safely castled.

Black's d7 knight is heading to f6 to reinforce the knight on e4 and the d5 square.

Both players need to develop the queenside pieces.

White has the bishop pair but also doubled c-pawns.

Philidor Defense



The Philidor Defense, **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6**, is named after 18th century music composer and chess player André Danican Philidor.

As an alternative to 2...Nc6, Philidor advocated 2...d6 with the idea of 3...f5.

The opening is considered a solid but passive choice for Black since 2...d6 blocks the dark-squared bishop on the a3-f8 diagonal.

White usually plays 3.d4 in an attempt to control the center.

Black's most common response is the Exchange Variation, 3...exd4, relieving tension in the center.

Black's other main choice is to leave the pawn on the e5 square and play 3...Nf6, the Nimzowitsch Variation.

Philidor Defense

1.e4	e5
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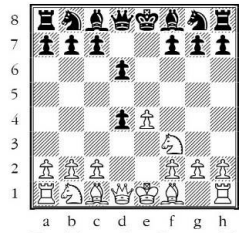
2.Nf3	d6
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3.d4

3...exd4

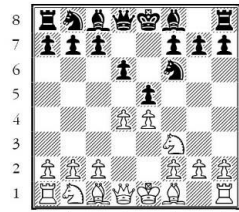
3...Nf6

Exchange Variation



Position after 3...exd4
White to move

Nimzowitsch Variation



Position after 3...Nf6
White to move

Exchange Variation

The Exchange Variation of the Philidor Defense is **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 exd4.**

White's alternative on the third move is 3.Bc4, delaying or giving up the idea of moving the d-pawn to d4. A sample line is 3...Be7 4.0-0 Nf6 5.d3 0-0 6.c3 c6 7.Bb3 Bg4 8.Nbd2 Nbd7.



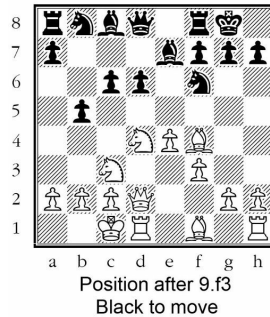
4.Nxd4 White can also play 4.Qxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Be7 6.Bg5 0-0 7.0-0-0 Nc6 8.Qd2.

4...Nf6 Black may choose to fianchetto the dark-squared bishop with 4...g6 5.Nc3 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Qd2 0-0 8.0-0-0 Re8 9.f3 Nc6.

5.Nc3 Be7 6.Bf4 White's other choices are 6.Be2, 6.g3, 6.Bc4, 6.Nde2, and 6.Qf3.

6...0-0 7.Qd2 c6 Black can also choose between 7...Nc6 8.0-0-0 Nxd4 9.Qxd4 Be6 10.f3 Nd7 and 7...a6 8.0-0-0 b5.

8.0-0-0 b5 9.f3



The players castled on opposite sides.

White has a little more space in the center and can either attack Black's king on the kingside or focus on attacking the d6 pawn.

Black needs to develop the queenside pieces and wants the action to take place on the queenside in front of White's king.

Black can continue queenside expansion with 9...b4 followed by 10...c5.

Nimzowitsch Variation

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 Nf6 is the Nimzowitsch Variation named after influential hypermodern theorist Aron Nimzowitsch.

Black can also play 3...Nd7 4.Bc4 c6 5.0-0 Be7 6.dxe5 dxe5 7.Ng5 Bxg5 8.Qh5 Qe7.

After 3...f5, White can choose between 4.Nc3, 4.Bc4, 4.dxe5, and 4.exf5.



4.Nc3 White can also play 4.dxe5 Nxe4 5.Qd5 Nc5 6.Bg5 Qd7 7.exd6 Bxd6 8.Nc3 Qe6+ 9.Be3.

4...Nbd7 5.Bc4 An alternative line for White is 5.g3 Be7 6.Bg2 0-0 7.0-0 c6 8.a4 Re8 9.h3 Bf8 10.Re1 Qc7 11.a5 expanding on the queenside.

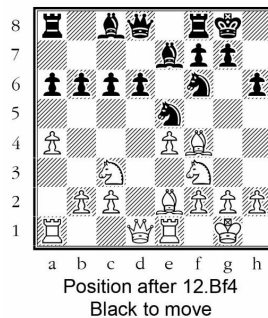
5...Be7 6.0-0 A tactical alternative is 6.dxe5 dxe5 7.Bxf7+ Kxf7 8.Ng5+ Kg8 9.Ne6 Qe8 10.Nxc7 Qg6 11.Nxa8 Qxg2 12.Rf1.

6...0-0 7.a4 grabbing space on the queenside.

7...c6 8.Re1 b6 9.Bg5 White can also play 9.d5 cxd5 10.Nxd5 Nxd5 11.Bxd5.

9...a6 10.dxe5 Nxe5 11.Be2 A symmetrical pawn structure occurs after 11.Nxe5 dxe5 12.Qf3 Nd7 13.Be3 Bc5 14.Rad1 Qe7.

11...h6 12.Bf4



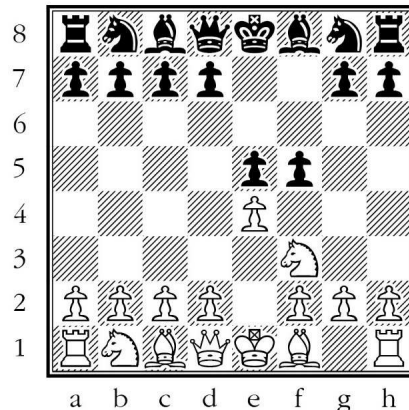
Both kings are safely castled.

White has an extra pawn in the center and can apply pressure

on the half-open d-file.

Black needs to develop the queenside bishop and rook and may chase White's dark squared bishop with ideas like 12... Ng6 13.Be3 Ng4.

Latvian Gambit



The Latvian Gambit, **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5**, is also known as the Greco Countergambit since it was played by Gioachino Greco in the early 1600s.

Black attacks the White center pawn but exposes the king on the a2-g8 and h5-e8 diagonals.

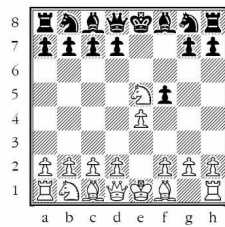
The Latvian Gambit lends itself to open tactical positions. White's main responses are 3.Nxe5 and 3.Bc4.

Latvian Gambit

1.e4 e5

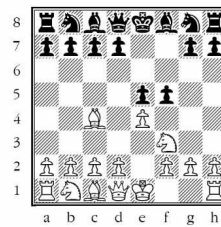
2.Nf3 f5

3.Nxe5



Position after 3.Nxe5
Black to move

3.Bc4



Position after 3.Bc4
Black to move

3.Nxe5

The Latvian Gambit begins **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5.**

Black can also play 2...d5, the Queen's Pawn Counter Gambit (also called the Elephant Gambit). A possible line is 3.exd5 e4 4.Qe2 Nf6 5.Nc3 Be7 6.Nxe4 0-0.

3.Nxe5 captures the unprotected pawn on e5.



3...Qf6 Black protects the pawn on f5 and attacks the knight.

Other possible lines for Black are:

3...Nc6 4.d4 Qf6 5.Nc3 Bb4,

3...Qh4 4.Nf3 Qxe4+ 5.Be2 d5, and

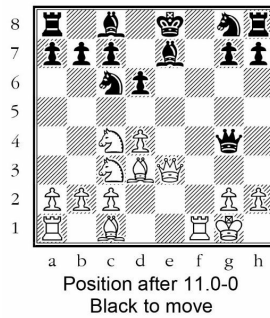
3...Nf6 4.exf5 d6 5.Nf3 Bxf5.

4.d4 Another variation is **4.Nc4 fxe4 5.Nc3 Qf7 6.Ne3 c6 7.d3 exd3 8.Bxd3 d5.**

4...d6 5.Nc4 fxe4 6.Nc3 White can also choose between **6.Ne3** or **6.Be2 Nc6 7.d5 Ne5 8.0-0 Nxc4 9.Bxc4 Qg6 10.Bb5+ Kd8 11.Bf4.**

6...Qg6 7.f3 Another possible variation is **7.Bf4 Nf6 8.Qd2 Be7 9.0-0-0 0-0.**

7...exf3 8.Qxf3 Nc6 9.Bd3 Qg4 10.Qe3+ Be7 11.0-0



White castled and has a lead in development.

Since White has the safer king, Black would like to trade queens to relieve pressure on the Black king.

Black needs to develop two minor pieces and castle.

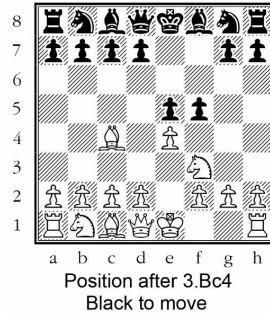
A couple variations available to Black are 11...Nf6 12.d5 Nb4 or 11...Qxd4 12.Nb5 Qxe3+ 13.Nxe3 Kd8.

3.Bc4

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5 3.Bc4 develops the bishop and attempts to exploit the open a2-g8 diagonal.

Less commonly played variations White can consider are:

3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bc4 fxe4 5.Nxe5,
3.exf5 e4 4.Ne5 Nf6 5.Be2,
3.d3 Nc6 4.Nc3 Nf6 5.exf5, and
3.d4 fxe4 4.Nxe5 Nf6 5.Bg5.



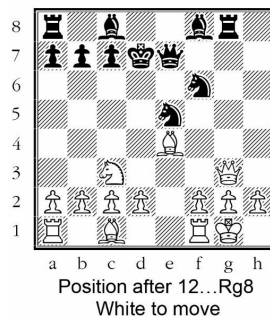
3...fxe4 4.Nxe5 d5 4...Qg5 and 4...Nf6 are other options for Black.

5.Qh5+ g6 6.Nxg6 hxg6 Black can also play **6...Nf6 7.Qe5+ Be7 8.Bb5+ c6 9.Nxe7 Qxe7 10.Qxe7+ Kxe7 11.Be2 Rg8**.

7.Qxg6+ 7.Qxh8 Kf7 8.Qd4 Be6 9.Be2 is another variation available to White.

7...Kd7 8.Bxd5 Nf6 9.Nc3 Qe7 10.0-0 10.d3 exd3+ 11.Be3 c6 12.Bb3 Bh6 13.0-0-0 Bxe3+ 14.fxe3 b6 intending to hide the Black king on the queenside is another possible line.

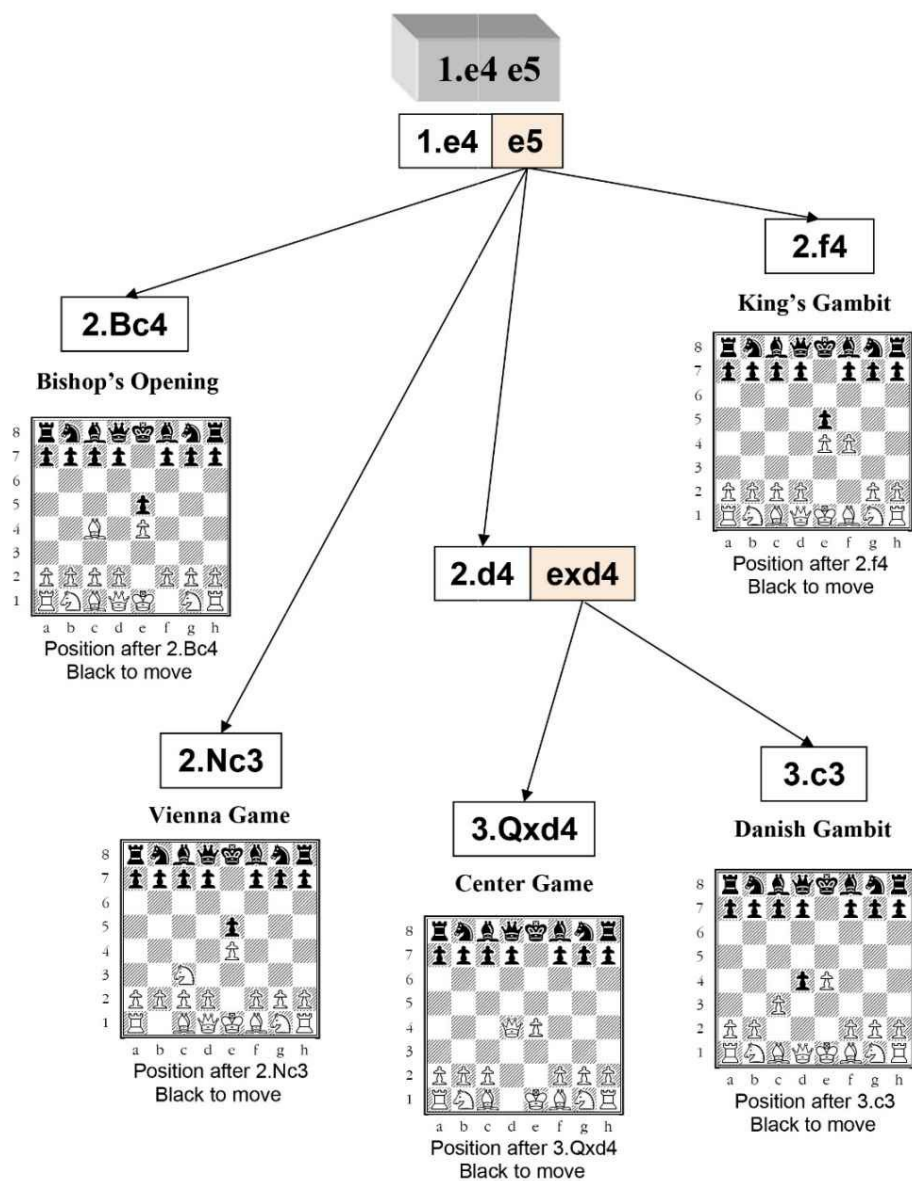
10...Nc6 11.Bxe4 Ne5 12.Qg3 Rg8



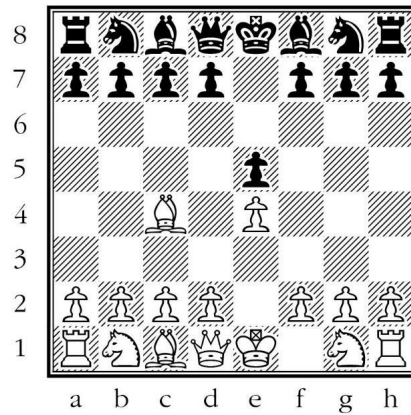
White has four pawns for a knight.

Both players need to develop the queenside bishop and rook.

White would like to attack Black's king in the center before he can find shelter on the queenside.



Bishop's Opening



Position after 2.Bc4
Black to move

The Bishop's Opening, **1.e4 e5 2.Bc4**, is one of the oldest openings dating back to the 16th century where it was studied by Luis Lucena and Ruy Lopez .

White's second move attacks Black's vulnerable f7 square, prevents 2...d5, and keeps open the possibility of moving the pawn to f4.

A future f4 pawn push can transpose into the King's Gambit or Vienna Game.

The Bishop's Opening can also transpose into the Giuoco Piano, Two Knights Defense, or Scotch Game.

The two main variations of the Bishop's Opening that don't transpose into other openings are the Berlin Defense, 2...Nf6, and the Classical Defense, 2...Bc5.

Bishop's Opening

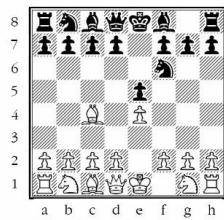
1.e4

e5

2.Bc4

2...Nf6

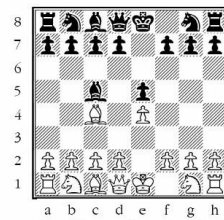
Berlin Defense



Position after 2...Nf6
White to move

2...Bc5

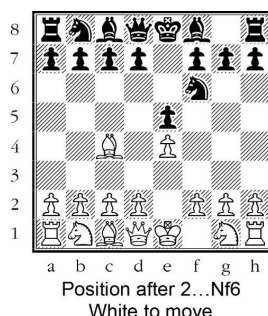
Classical Defense



Position after 2...Bc5
White to move

Berlin Defense

The Berlin Defense of the Bishop's Opening is **1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 Nf6**.



Defending the pawn with **3.d3** is White's most commonly played response.

The Urusov Gambit where White sacrifices a pawn for a lead in development is **3.d4 exd4 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.Qxd4 Nf6 6.Bg5 Be7 7.Nc3**.

3...c6 Another variation unique to the Bishop's Opening is **3...d5 4.exd5 Nxd5 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.0-0 Bg4. 3...Nc6 4.Nf3 Bc5 5.c3** can transpose into the Giuoco Pianissimo.

4.Nf3 d5 Black can keep the position closed with **4...Be7 5.0-0 d6 6.c3 0-0 7.Bb3 Nbd7**.

5.Bb3 White can also play **5.exd5 cxd5 6.Bb3**.

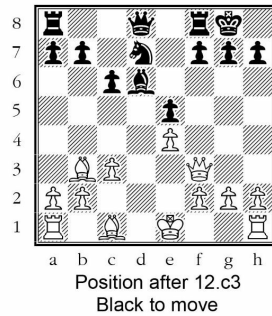
5...Bd6 Another variation for Black is **5...Bb4+ 6.Bd2 Bxd2+ 7.Nbxd2 Nbd7 8.0-0 0-0 9.Re1 Re8**.

6.Nc3 **6.exd5** and **6.0-0** are other options for White.

6...dxe4 Black can also play **6...Be6 7.Bg5 Qa5 8.0-0 Nbd7**.

7.Ng5 0-0 8.Ncxe4 Nxe4 9.Nxe4 Bf5 10.Qf3 If White plays **10.0-0**, Black can respond **10...Na6**.

10...Bxe4 11.dxe4 Nd7 12.c3



The pawn structure is symmetrical; White has the bishop pair.

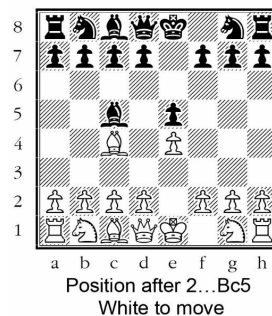
White plans to castle kingside and needs to develop the queenside bishop and rook.

Black plans to expand on the queenside.

12...Nc5 13.Bc2 a5 14.0-0 b5 is a possible continuation for the game.

Classical Defense

The Classical or Closed Defense is **1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 Bc5** where Black copies White's second move.



3.c3, the Philidor Variation, is unique to the Bishop's Opening.

3.Nf3 Nc6 transposes to the Giuoco Piano and **3.Nc3** can transpose into the Vienna Game.

3.b4 is the Wing Gambit of the Bishop's Opening, offering the b-pawn to deflect Black's bishop away from attacking the central d4 square.

3.d4 is the Lewis Gambit

3...Nf6 The Lewis Counter Gambit is **3...d5**.

4.d4 exd4 5.e5 Another line for White is **5.cxd4 Bb4+ 6.Bd2 Bxd2+ 7.Nxd2 d5 8.exd5**.

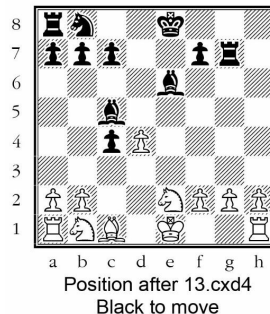
5...d5 6.exf6 6.Bb5+ is an alternative move for White.

6...dxc4 7.Qe2+ Be6 8.fxcg7 Rg8 9.Qh5 Qd5

Alternatives for Black are **9...Qd6**, **9...Qe7**, and **9...Nd7**.

10.Qxh7 Qe5+ Black can also play **10...f6** to defend the rook with the bishop.

11.Ne2 Qxg7 12.Qxg7 Rxc7 13.cxd4 forcing Black to move the c5 bishop.



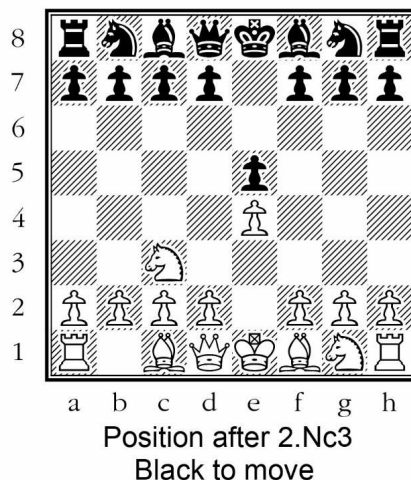
If **13...Bb4+**, White can play **14.Kf1** to protect the g2 pawn.
White can castle after any other bishop move.

The position has an unbalanced pawn structure.

White is a pawn ahead but needs to quickly develop the queenside pieces.

Black has a lead in development and the bishop pair. Black can develop the knight to c6 and castle queenside, or immediately push for an attack due to the lead in development.

Vienna Game



The Vienna Game, **1.e4 e5 2.Nc3**, is named after the Austrian capital.

The opening was used by Steinitz, Tartakower, and Spielmann who all lived in Vienna at some time during their lives.

By playing 2.Nc3, White develops a piece and keeps open the options of playing f4, Qg4, and Qh5.

Black's two main responses are the natural developing moves 2...Nf6 and 2...Nc6.

The Vienna Game can transpose into other 1.e4 e5 openings.

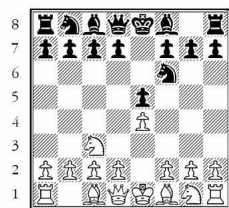
Vienna Game

1.e4 e5

2.Nc3

2...Nf6

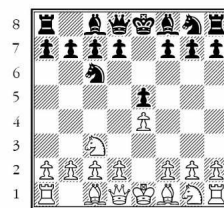
Falkbeer Variation



Position after 2...Nf6
White to move

2...Nc6

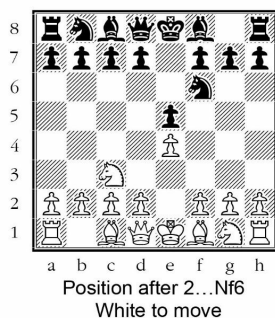
Max Lange Defense



Position after 2...Nc6
White to move

2...Nf6

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6, sometimes called the Falkbeer Variation named after 19th century Austrian master Ernst Falkbeer, can easily transpose into the Three Knights Game or Four Knights Game.



3.f4 is the Vienna Gambit.

A main alternative for White is 3.g3 d5 4.exd5 Nxd5 5.Bg2 Nxc3 6.bxc3 Bd6 7.Nf3 0-0 8.0-0 Nc6 9.d4.

Another variation White can play is 3.Bc4 Nxe4 4.Qh5 Nd6 5.Bb3 Be7 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Nxe5 g6 8.Qe2 Nd4 9.Qd3 Nxb3 10.axb3.

3...d5 4.fxe5 Alternatives for White are 4.d3 exf4 5.exd5 Nxd5 6.Nxd5 Qxd5 7.Bxf4 or 4.exd5 Nxd5 5.fxe5 Nxc3 6.bxc3 Qh4+ 7.Ke2.

4...Nxe4 5.Nf3 White can also play 5.Qf3 Nxc3 6.dxc3 Be6 7.d4 or 5.d3 Nxc3 6.bxc3 c5 7.Nf3.

5...Be7 Other developing moves for Black are 5...Bc5, 5...Bb4, 5...Nc6, and 5...Bg4.

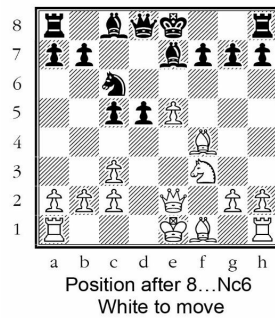
6.Qe2 White can also play 6.d4.

6...Nxc3 Another line for Black is 6...Ng5 7.d4 Ne6 8.Be3 Nc6.

7.dxc3 capturing away from the center to free the c1

bishop.

7...c5 8.Bf4 Nc6



Black has a better pawn structure since White has doubled c-pawns and an isolated pawn on e5.

White has more space on the kingside and can safely castle queenside.

White needs to develop the kingside bishop and both rooks.

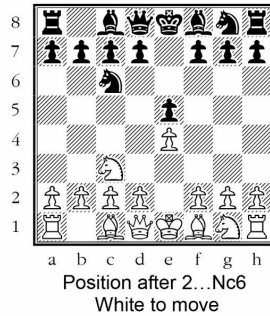
Black has more space on the queenside and can develop the queenside bishop to e6, f5, or g4.

Black plans on castling kingside where the pawns haven't moved.

2...Nc6

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 is sometimes called the Max Lange Defense named after 19th century German master Max Lange.

2...Bc5 and 2...d6 are occasionally played by Black.



3.f4 is another variation of the Vienna Gambit.

White's other main choices are 3.Bc4 developing the bishop, 3.g3 followed by fianchettoing the kingside bishop, and 3.Nf3 often transposing into the Four Knights Game.

3...exf4 Black can decline the gambit with 3...Bc5.

4.Nf3 Another variation is 4.d4 Qh4+ 5.Ke2 d5 6.exd5 Bg4+ 7.Nf3 0-0-0 8.dxc6 where Black sacrifices a piece for an attack on White's king in the center.

4...g5 5.h4 g4 6.Ng5 h6 Black can also play 6...d6.

7.Nxf7 sacrificing the knight to expose Black's king.

7...Kxf7 8.d4 controlling the center and freeing the dark-squared bishop. 8.Bc4+ and 8.Qxg4 are other possible attacking moves for White.

8...d5 Another idea for Black is 8...d6 9.Bxf4 Bg7.

9.Bxf4 Bb4 9...dxe4 is met by 10.d5.

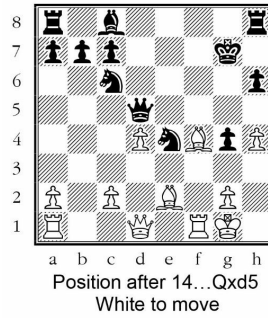
10.Be2 10.e5, 10.Bb5, and 10.Bd3 are alternative moves for White.

10...Bxc3+ 11.bxc3 Nf6 11...dxe4 12.0-0 Ke8 moving the king back toward the center is another defensive idea for Black.

12.0-0 White can also play 12.e5 Ne4 13.Bxg4.

12...Kg7 13.c4 Nxe4 An alternative defensive line for Black is 13...dxe4 14.d5 Ne7.

14.cxd5 Qxd5

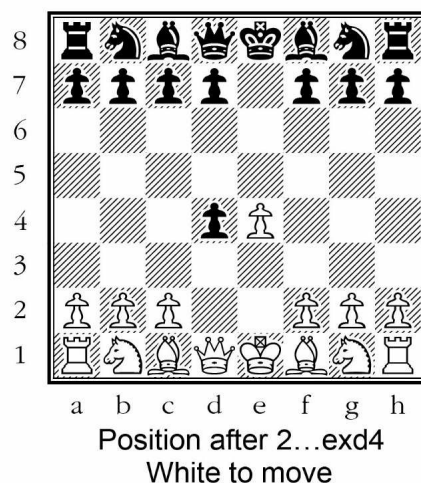


Black is ahead a minor piece in material, but has an exposed king which White will try to attack quickly.

Black needs to develop the bishop and queenside rook.

White can continue the attack by playing 15.c4 with the threat of 16.d5.

Center Game Danish Gambit



In the Center Game, **1.e4 e5 2.d4**, White's second move attempts to remove Black's center pawn on e5 and open the d-file.

A problem with 2.d4 is after **2...exd4**, White's knight isn't on f3 to recapture the pawn.

After 3.Qxd4, Black can develop the knight to c6, gaining a tempo by attacking White's queen.

White's main alternative to recapturing the pawn with the queen is 3.c3, leading into the Danish Gambit where White sacrifices one or two pawns to seize the initiative by quickly developing the bishops.

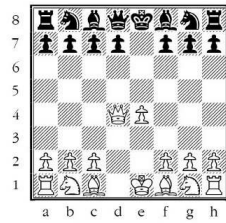
Center Game and Danish Gambit

1.e4 e5

2.d4 exd4

3.Qxd4

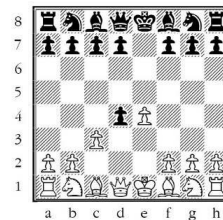
Center Game



Position after 3.Qxd4
Black to move

3.c3

Danish Gambit

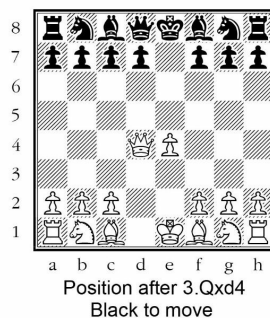


Position after 3.c3
Black to move

Center Game

After **1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4**, the Center Game is when White recaptures the pawn with **3.Qxd4**.

3.Nf3 or 3.Bc4 can transpose into the Scotch Game, Petroff Defense, Two Knights Defense, or Philidor Defense.



3...Nc6 attacking the queen is the natural move. Another idea for Black is **3...Qf6 4.Qe3 Bb4+ 5.c3 Ba5 6.Bc4 d6 7.f4 Ne7 8.Nf3 Nbc6 9.Qe2 Bb6**.

4.Qe3 retreating the queen to a square where she is relatively safe from attack. An alternative line for White is **4.Qa4 Nf6 5.Bg5 Be7 6.Nc3 0-0 7.Nf3 d6 8.0-0-0**.

4...Nf6 Alternative lines for Black are **4...g6 5.Nc3 Bg7 6.Bd2 Nf6 7.0-0-0 0-0**, **4...d6 5.Nc3 Nf6**, and **4...Bb4+ 5.c3 Ba5**.

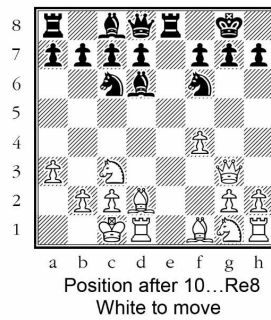
5.Nc3 Bb4 Black can also play **5...Be7 6.Bd2 d5 7.exd5 Nxd5**.

6.Bd2 0-0 7.0-0-0 Re8 8.Qg3 8.Bc4 is an alternative move for White.

8...Rxe4 8...Nxe4 9.Nxe4 Rxe4 10.c3 Be7 is also playable.

9.a3 Bd6 Black can also play **9...Ba5**.

10.f4 Re8



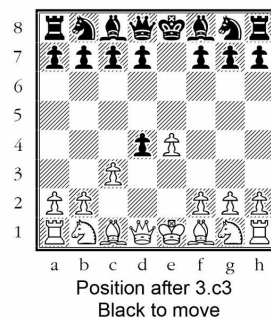
The players castled on opposite sides.

White has attacking chances on the kingside for the sacrificed pawn and can develop a piece with 11.Nf3 or 11.Bd3.

Black plans to move the bishop off d6 in order to move the d-pawn and develop the light-squared bishop.

Danish Gambit

1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.c3 where White plans to sacrifice one or two pawns for rapid development is called the Danish Gambit.



3...dxc3 accepting the gambit.

Black can decline the gambit by playing 3...d5 or 3...

Qe7.

4.Bc4 offering a second pawn. Recapturing the pawn with **4.Nxc3** is called the Half-Danish Gambit and often transposes into the Göring Gambit of the Scotch Game.

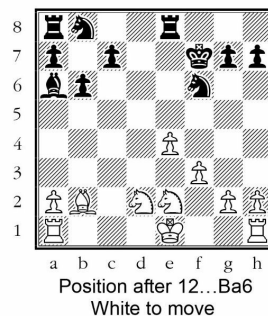
4...cxb2 5.Bxb2 d5 Other ideas for Black are **5...Bb4+** **6.Nd2 Nf6 7.Bxf7+ Kxf7 8.Qb3+ d5 9.Qxb4 Nc6**, **5...d6 6.Qb3 Qd7**, and **5...Nh6 6.Nf3 b6 7.Qe2 Bb4+ 8.Nc3 0-0**.

6.Bxd5 Nf6 Black can also play **6...Bb4+ 7.Nc3 Bxc3+ 8.Bxc3 Nf6 9.Qf3 Nxd5 10.exd5 0-0**.

7.Bxf7+ An alternative for White is **7.Nc3 Be7 8.Qb3**.

7...Kxf7 8.Qxd8 Bb4+ with a discovered attack on the queen.

9.Qd2 Bxd2+ 10.Nxd2 Re8 11.f3 b6 12.Ne2 Ba6



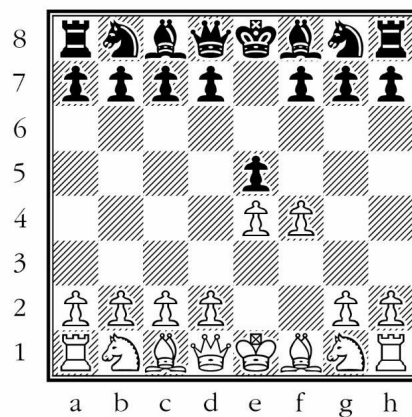
Black has a pawn majority on the queenside while White has the majority on the kingside.

The players have opposite-colored bishops.

Black needs to develop the queenside knight and rook.

White needs to develop the rooks and may keep the king in the center since the queens are traded.

King's Gambit



Position after 2.f4
Black to move

The King's Gambit, **1.e4 e5 2.f4**, is one of the oldest documented openings dating back to the 16th century.

By playing 2.f4, White offers a pawn to clear Black's e5 pawn from the center, which White hopes to control. White exposes the king, but also creates attacking chances on the f-file with the vulnerable f7 pawn as a potential target.

The King's Gambit is best suited for the aggressive player who prefers open positions and is willing to accept risk. Unbalanced pawn structures are common.

In the King's Gambit Accepted, 2...exf4, Black captures the f-pawn, usually resulting in an open position with tactical chances for each side.

Black can also decline the gambit, most commonly by playing 2...Bc5.

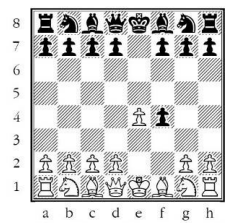
King's Gambit

1.e4 e5

2.f4

2...exf4

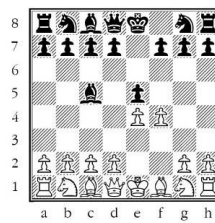
King's Gambit Accepted



Position after 2...exf4
White to move

2...Bc5

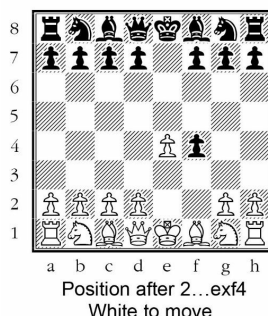
King's Gambit Declined



Position after 2...Bc5
White to move

King's Gambit Accepted

In the King's Gambit Accepted, **1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4**, Black accepts the challenge and captures the pawn.



White usually controls the center with pawns on e4 and d4 and develops freely, while Black often attempts to retain the extra pawn.

3.Nf3 developing the knight and preventing 3...Qh4+.

White's main alternative is 3.Bc4, the Bishop's Gambit, where Black may continue 3...Qh4+ 4.Kf1 Nf6 5.Nf3 Qh5, 3...d5 4.Bxd5 Nf6 5.Nc3 Bb4, or 3...Nf6 4.Nc3 c6 5.d4 d5.

3...g5 Other choices for Black are:

3...d5 4.exd5 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nxd5 6.Nxd5 Qxd5 7.d4 Be7,
3...d6 4.d4 g5 5.h4 g4 6.Ng1 Bg7 7.Ne2 Qf6,
3...Ne7 4.d4 d5 5.Nc3 dxe4 6.Nxe4 Nd5,
3...Be7 4.Bc4 Nf6 5.e5 Ng4 6.0-0 Nc6, and
3...Nf6 4.e5 Nh5 5.Be2 d6 6.0-0 dxe5 7.Nxe5 Bc5+ 8.Kh1 Nf6.

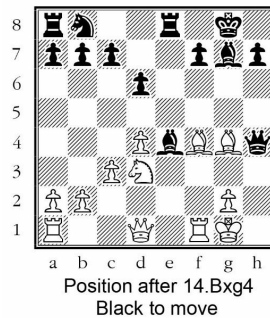
4.h4 White can also play 4.Bc4 Bg7 5.0-0 d6 6.d4.

4...g4 5.Ne5 Nf6 Alternatives for Black are 5...d6 6.Nxg4 Nf6 7.Nxf6+ Qxf6 8.Nc3 Nc6 and 5...Bg7 6.d4 Nf6 7.Nxg4 Nxe4 8.Nc3 d5.

6.d4 6.Nxg4 and 6.Bc4 are alternatives for White.

6...d6 7.Nd3 Nxe4 8.Bxf4 Bg7 9.c3 0-0 10.Nd2 Re8

11.Be2 Bf5 12.Nxe4 Bxe4 13.0-0 Qxh4 14.Bxg4



Black still is a pawn ahead and needs to develop the queenside knight and rook.

White has better development and a half-open f-file for the rook.

If Black plays 14...Bxd3, White can play 15.g3 to chase Black's queen away from attacking the g4 bishop before recapturing on d3.

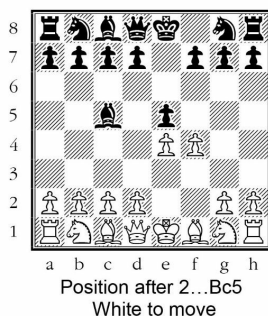
King's Gambit Declined

After **1.e4 e5 2.f4**, the most common way for Black to decline the King's Gambit is to develop the bishop with **2...Bc5**.

Black can also consider playing **2...Nc6 3.Nf3 f5**.

The Falkbeer Counter Gambit, **2...d5**, is named for 19th century Austrian master and journalist Ernst Falkbeer. Black offers a pawn back, hoping to exploit White's exposed king. A sample variation is **3.exd5 e4 4.d3 Nf6 5.dxe4 Nxe4 6.Nf3**

Bc5.

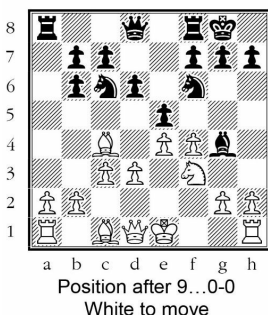


3.Nf3 d6 4.Nc3 A variation where White sacrifices a pawn for a lead in development is **4.c3 Nf6 5.fxe5 dxe5 6.d4 exd4 7.cxd4 Bb4+ 8.Bd2 Qe7 9.Bd3 Nxe4 10.Bxe4 Qxe4+ 11.Kf2 Bxd2 12.Nbxd2 Qd5 13.Re1+ Be6.**

4...Nf6 Black can also play **4...Nc6 5.Bb5 Bd7 6.d3 Nd4 7.Bxd7+ Qxd7 8.fxe5 Nxf3+ 9.Qxf3 dxe5 10.Rf1 f6.**

5.Bc4 Nc6 6.d3 Bg4 7.Na4 eliminating the bishop on the g1-a7 diagonal that prevents White from castling kingside.

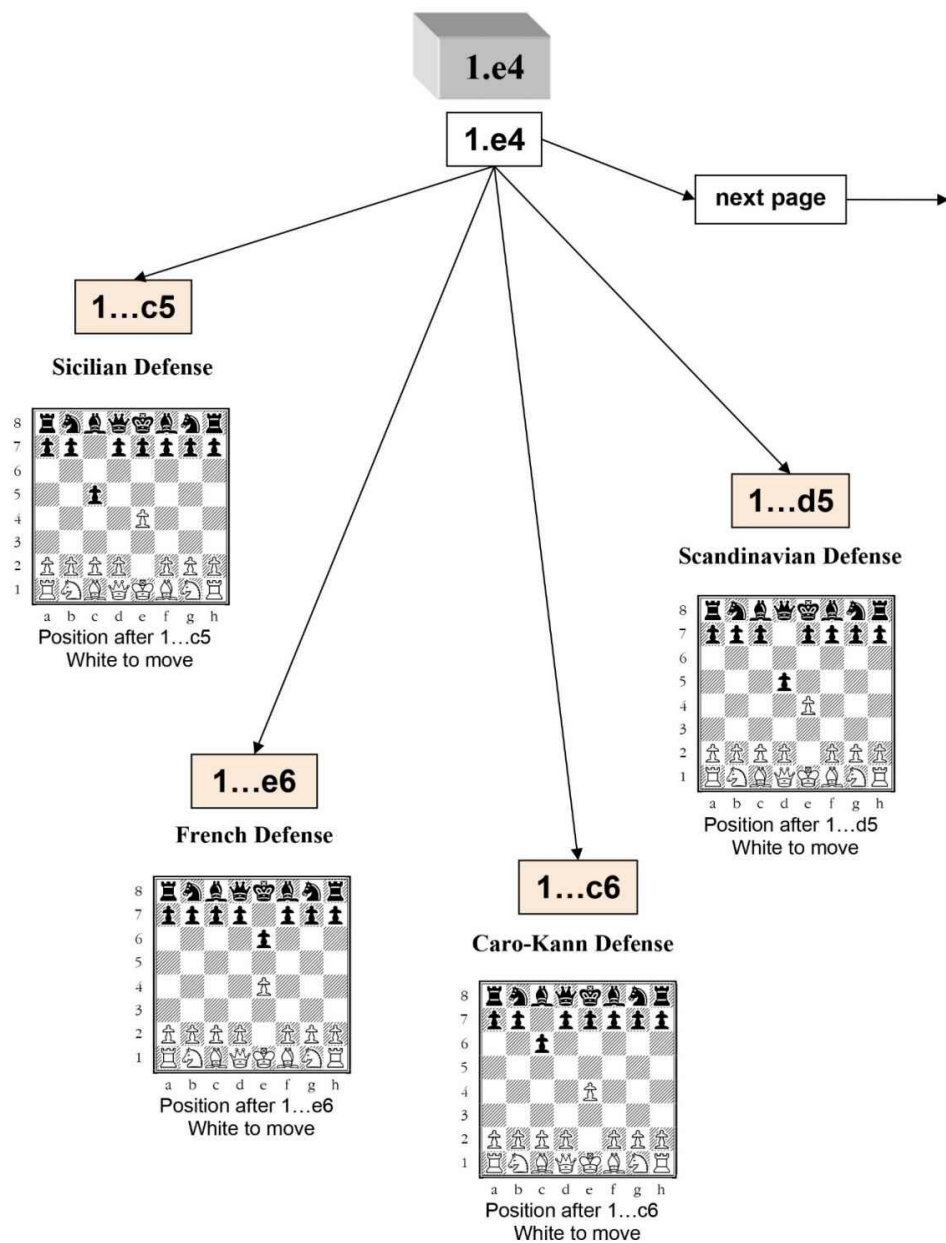
7...Bb6 8.Nxb6 axb6 9.c3 0-0 Black can also play **9...exf4 10.Bxf4 Nh5 11.Be3 Ne5 12.Bb3 Nxf3+ 13.gxf3 Be6.** If Black plays **13...Qh4+**, White can move the king to d2 and head for the queenside.

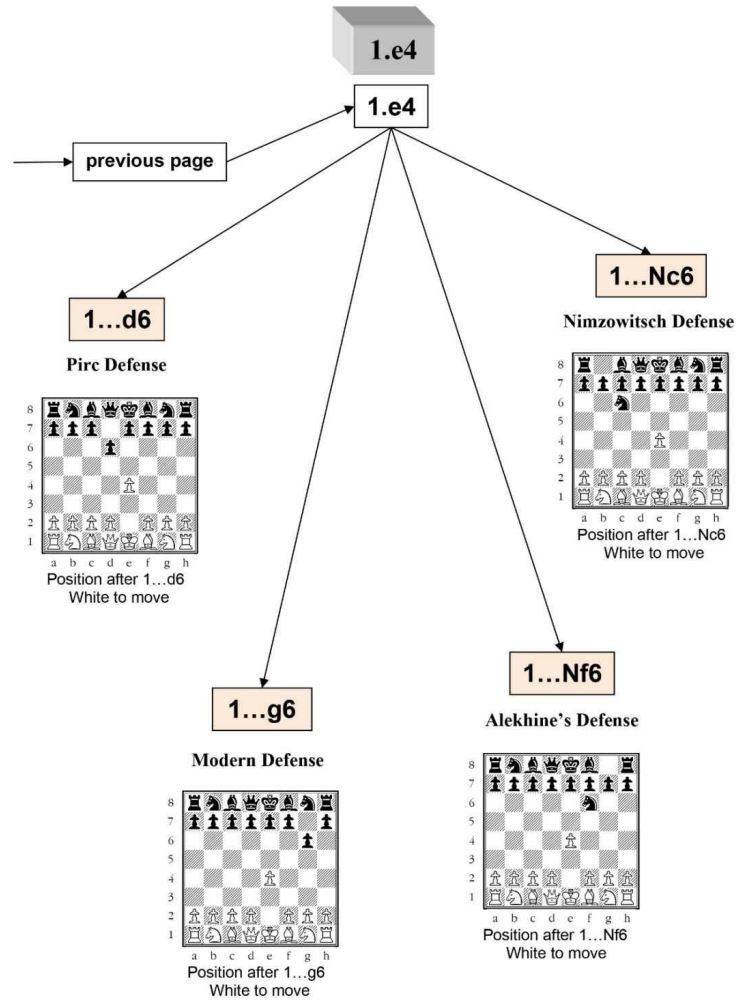


White has the bishop pair and plans to castle kingside.

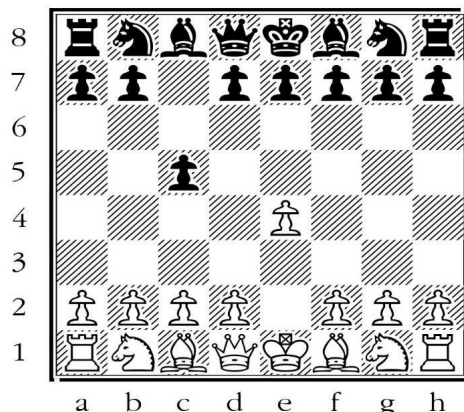
After castling, White can play **Be3**, and break the pin with **Qe1** with the idea of moving the queen to g3 or h4.

Black can connect the rooks by developing the queen to d7 or e7 and may attack White's bishop with ...Na5.





Sicilian Defense



Position after 1...c5
White to move

The Sicilian Defense, **1.e4 c5**, is one of the most popular responses to 1.e4.

Giulio Polerio analyzed it in a 1594 manuscript, and it was named by the Italian chess player and writer Gioachino Greco shortly thereafter.

Black creates a pawn imbalance and stakes out space on the queenside, while preventing White from securing a pawn center with pawns on e4 and d4.

White's most common plan is to play the Open Sicilian, 2.Nf3 and 3.d4, to gain space in the center and open up lines for attack.

After Black plays 3...cxd4, Black has two center pawns on the d- and e- files and a half-open c-file for the queen or rook.

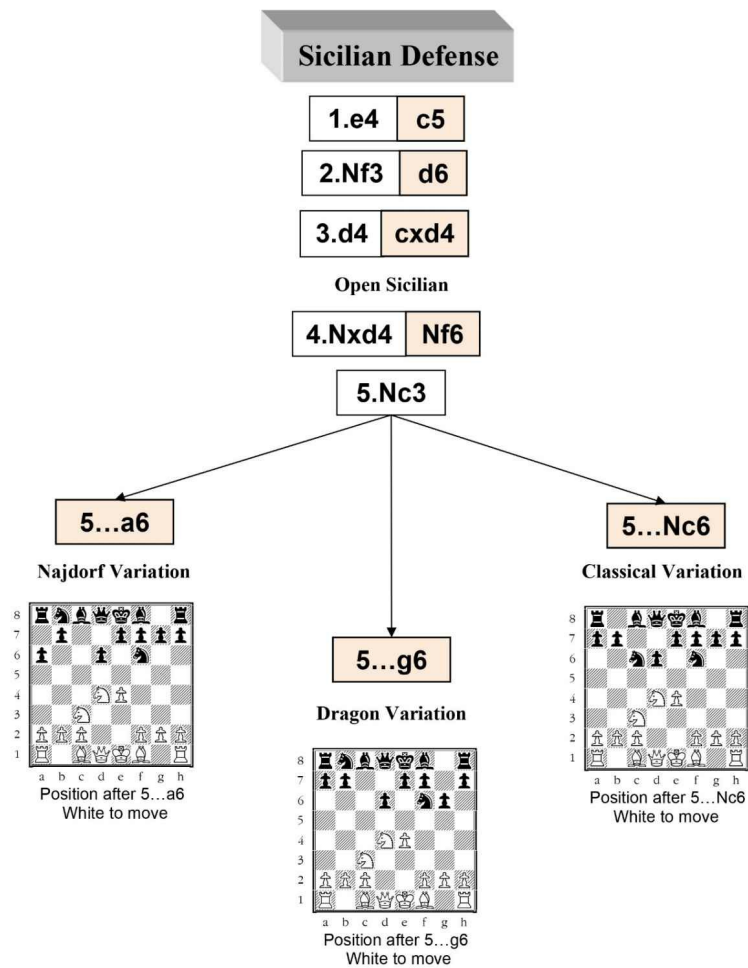
Black usually expands and attacks on the queenside, while White plans to play on the kingside.

The Sicilian Defense is loaded with a variety of strategies with differing pawn structures and contains more variations than any other opening.

After 2.Nf3, Black has three main second moves to

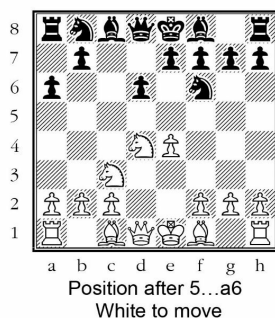
choose from (2...d6, 2...e6, and 2...Nc6), which will be separated into three different subsections with their unique variations. The order in which these moves are played is frequently interchanged, causing variations to overlap.

The final section is second move alternatives for White.



Najdorf Variation

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 is called the Najdorf Variation of the Sicilian Defense named after 20th century Polish-Argentine Grandmaster Miguel Najdorf.



5...a6 prevents White's knights and light-squared bishop from safely moving to b5 while maintaining flexible development options for the minor pieces.

Black typically plans a minority attack with ...b5 sometimes followed by ...Bb7 to put pressure on the e4 pawn.

Black can move the e-pawn to e6 or e5 and develop the b8 knight to either c6 or d7.

White has a variety of playable and popular variations to choose from: 6.Be3, 6.Bg5, 6.Be2, and 6.Bc4. Other choices for White are 6.h3, 6.f4, 6.g3, and 6.a4.

6.Be3

6.Be3 is called the English Attack and is usually followed in some sequence by f3, g4, Qd2, and 0-0-0.

6...e5 Alternatives for Black are 6...e6, 6...Ng4, and 6...Nbd7.

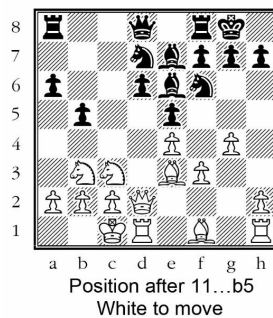
7.Nb3 White can also play 7.Nf3 Be7 8.Bc4 0-0 9.0-0.

7...Be6 8.f3 Alternatives for White are 8.Qd2, 8.h3, and 8.f4.

8...Be7 Black can also play 8...h5 or 8...Nbd7.

9.Qd2 0-0 10.0-0-0 Nbd7 10...a5 11.Bb5 Na6 12.Qe2 Qb8 is an alternative line for Black.

11.g4 b5



Opposite side castling is the main theme in the middlegame with White wanting to attack on the kingside while Black attacks on the queenside.

6.Bg5

White intends to castle queenside and launch an attack on the kingside.

6...e6 Black can also play 6...Nbd7.

7.f4 is the most frequently played move by White. Black has a number of playable moves at this point: 7...Qb6, 7...Be7, 7...Nbd7, 7...Qc7, 7...h6, 7...Nc6, and 7...b5.

We will examine the two most popular, 7...Qb6 and 7...Be7.

7...Qb6 is called the Poisoned Pawn Variation of the Sicilian Defense.

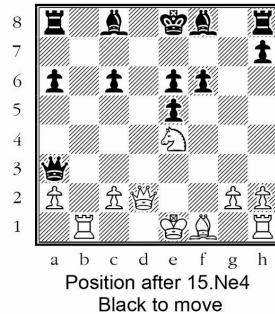
8.Qd2 sacrificing the b2 pawn. Alternatives are **8.Qd3** and **8.Nb3**.

8...Qxb2 Black can refuse the pawn with **8...Nc6**.

9.Rb1 Qa3 10.f5 White can also play **10.e5**, **10.Bxf6**, or **10.Be2**.

10...Nc6 11.fxe6 fxe6 12.Nxc6 bxc6 13.e5 An alternative for White is **13.Be2 Be7 14.0-0 0-0 15.Rb3**.

13...dxe5 14.Bxf6 gxf6 15.Ne4



White has a lead in development and will have a safer king position after castling kingside.

Black has a couple of extra pawns in the center and the bishop pair.

7...Be7

8.Qf3 White prepares to castle queenside while positioning the queen to support a kingside attack.

8...Qc7 Black can also play **8...h6 9.Bh4 Qc7**.

9.0-0-0 Nbd7



White has more control in the center and typically plays either 10.g4, 10.Be2, or 10.Bd3 with plans to expand on the kingside.

Black plans to play ...b5 and focus the attack on the queenside in front of White's castled king.

Sometimes Black leaves the king in the center where he may be safer than being castled on the kingside in front of White's attack on that wing.

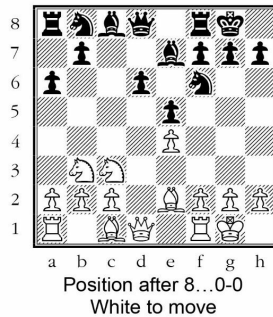
6.Be2

6.Be2 is called the Classical or Opočenský Variation named after 20th century, four-time Czech Champion, Karel Opočenský.

6...e5 6...e6 transposes to the Scheveningen Variation examined later. The struggle is now focused on the d5 square in front of Black's d6 backward pawn.

7.Nb3 Be7 8.0-0 White can also play 8.Be3 or 8.Bg5.

8...0-0



Black needs to develop the queenside pieces and typically focuses play on the half-open c-file.

White's rooks will gravitate to the d-file to put pressure on the backward d6 pawn.

White often moves the a-pawn to a4 and then a5 to prevent Black from expanding on the queenside with ...b5.

6.Bc4

6.Bc4, putting pressure on f7, is called the Sozin Variation named for 20th century Russian master Veniamin Sozin. It is also called the Fischer-Sozin Attack, after the 11th World Champion Bobby Fischer adopted it as part of his opening repertoire.

6...e6 7.Bb3 b5 grabbing space on the queenside. Also playable are 7...Nbd7 or 7...Be7.

8.0-0 Be7 9.Qf3 planning to attack on the kingside.

9...Qc7 9...Qb6 10.Be3 Qb7 is another option for Black.

10.Qg3 0-0 Another variation for Black is **10...Nc6 11.Nxc6 Qxc6 12.Re1 Bb7**.

11.Bh6 Ne8 12.Rad1 Bd7



Black plans to complete minor piece development with ...
Nc6 and focus the attack on the queenside.
Black's king can move to h8 to break the pin on the g-file
and threaten White's bishop on h6.

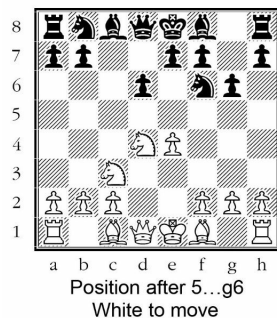
White often plays f4 with the idea of f5 to attack on the
kingside.

Dragon Variation

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 is the
Dragon Variation of the Sicilian Defense.

Black's pawns on d6, e7, f7, g6, and h7 form the shape of
a dragon that resembles the stars in the Draco constellation.

Black plans to fianchetto the dark-squared bishop on the
kingside where it aims at the center.



White's most popular choices against the Dragon Variation are 6.Be3, 6.Be2, and 6.f4.

6.Be3

6...Bg7 7.f3 supporting the e4 pawn and preventing ... Ng4 which attacks the e3 bishop.

7...Nc6 8.Qd2 This aggressive variation for White is called the Yugoslav Attack.

8...0-0 9.Bc4 preventing the d6 pawn from safely advancing to d5. 9.g4 and 9.0-0-0 are also playable.

9...Bd7 10.0-0-0 With the players castled on opposite sides, it is a race to the king.

White intends to attack Black's king with the idea of g4, h4, and h5 to open up the h-file, along with Bh6 to trade off the dark-squared bishops, with the idea of later invading with the queen on h6.

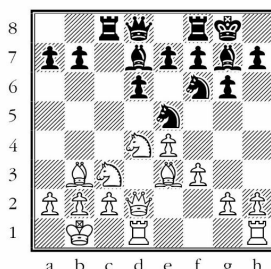
Black usually attacks on the queenside utilizing the half-open c-file, often sacrificing the exchange on c3.

10.h4 and 10.Bb3 are other options for White.

10...Rc8 Black can also play 10...Rb8, 10...Ne5, or 10...Qa5.

11.Bb3 Ne5 Also playable is 11...Nxd4 12.Bxd4 b5.

12.Kb1 12.h4 h5 13.Bg5 Rc5 14.Kb1 is an alternative line for White.



Opposite side castling is the predominant theme.

Black's main options are 12...Re8, 12...Nc4, and 12...a6.

White plans to expand on the kingside with g4 and h4.

6.Be2

This is called the Classical Dragon Variation.

6...Bg7 7.0-0 0-0 8.Be3 White can also play 8.Re1, 8.Bg5, or 8.Nb3.

8...Nc6 Black has played the normal Dragon moves and threatens 9...d5 to open up the center and a1-h8 diagonal for the dark-squared bishop.

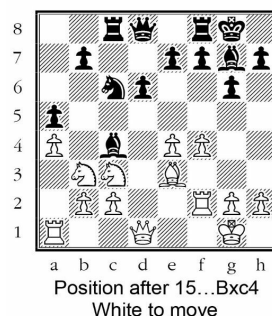
9.Nb3 eyeing d5 with the queen, to prevent 9...d5. White can also play 9.Qd2.

9...a5 9...a6 with the idea of 10...b5 is an alternative for Black.

10.a4 Be6 attacking the c4 square.

11.f4 Rc8 12.Bf3 Nd7 heading to c4 via b6.

13.Rf2 Nb6 14.Be2 Nc4 15.Bxc4 Bxc4 giving Black the bishop pair with pressure on the half-open c-file.



Both players are safely castled with pieces developed to good squares.

6.f4

This is the Levenfish Variation named after 20th century Russian Grandmaster Grigory Levenfish. 6.g3, 6.Bc4, and 6.Bg5 are alternative moves for White.

White plans a quick attack in the center by advancing the e4 pawn to e5.

6...Nc6 Black can also play 6...Bg7 or 6...Nbd7.

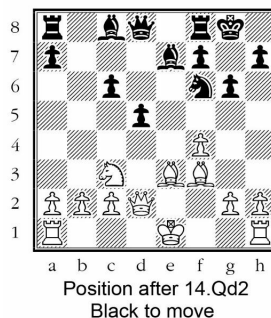
7.Nxc6 Another line for White is 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Bd3 0-0 9.0-0.

7...bxc6 8.e5 Nd7 9.exd6 exd6 Although White's pawn on f4 blocks the dark-squared bishop for now, it may become a problem for Black later if it advances to f5.

10.Qd4 attacking the rook and preparing to potentially castle queenside. Developing the bishop with 10.Be3 is an option for White.

10...Nf6 11.Be3 Be7 11...Bg7 leaves the d6 pawn vulnerable after 12.0-0-0. 12...d5 13.Qc5 threatens the c6 pawn and prevents Black from castling.

12.Be2 0-0 13.Bf3 d5 14.Qd2 avoiding the threat of ...c5 followed by ...d4.



White has the choice of castling kingside or queenside.

Classical Variation

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 is often referred to as the Classical Variation.

The same position also occurs after **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6**.

Black develops the queenside knight before the dark-squared bishop.



White's most common responses are **6.Bg5**, **6.Bc4**, and **6.Be2**.

6.Bg5

This is an aggressive variation called the Richter-Rauzer Attack named after 20th century German master Kurt Richter and Ukrainian master Vsevolod Rauzer.

White threatens to double Black's pawns with **7.Bxf6**.

6...e6 7.Qd2 a6 An alternative for Black is **7...Be7 8.0-0 0-0 9.f4 Nxd4 10.Qxd4 Qa5** with the players castled on opposite sides.

8.0-0-0 Bd7 Black can also play **8...h6** or **8...Be7**.

9.f4 **9.f3** is an alternative for White.

9...b5 expanding on the queenside in front of White's castled king.

10.Bxf6 gxf6 11.Kb1 moving off the half-open c-file.
11.Nxc6 and 11.f5 are alternatives.

11...Qb6 Black can also play 11...b4 or 11...Rc8.

12.Nxc6 White can also play 12.Nce2.

12...Bxc6 13.f5 Another idea for White is 13.Qe1 Be7
14.Bd3.

13...b4 14.Ne2 e5 locking up the center.

15.Ng3 h5 16.h4 Qc5 17.Qe2 Ke7 Black's king can live in the center, shielded by pawns.

18.Nxh5 Bb5 19.Qg4



White is a pawn ahead and is trying to attack on the kingside with more space and an outside passed h-pawn.

Black has the bishop pair and a half-open c-file with attacking prospects on the queenside.

6.Bc4

6.Bc4 develops the bishop to a natural square attacking f7.

6...e6 Other ideas for Black are 6...Qb6 and 6...Bd7.

7.Be3 7.Bb3 a6 8.Be3 Qc7 9.f4 is an alternative variation

for White.

7...Be7 Black can also begin to expand on the queenside with **7...a6**.

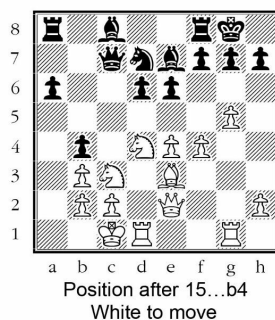
8.Qe2 0-0 9.0-0-0 is called the Velimirović Attack, named after late 20th and early 21st century Yugoslav Grandmaster Dragoljub Velimirović.

9...a6 10.Bb3 Qc7 developing the queen to the half-open c-file.

11.Rhg1 Na5 11...Nd7 with the idea of moving the knight to c5 is another idea for Black.

12.g4 b5 13.g5 Nxb3+ 14.axb3 Nd7 15.f4 15.h4 with the idea of h5 followed by g6 is another idea to attack the Black king.

15...b4 attacking the knight.



Since the players castled on opposite sides, White wants to attack on the kingside while Black attacks on the queenside.

6.Be2

6...e5 is called the Boleslavsky Variation named for 20th century Ukrainian Grandmaster Isaac Boleslavsky. Black can also play **6...g6** or **6...e6**.

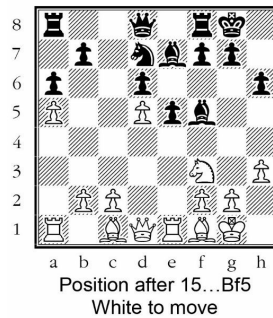
7.Nf3 White can also play **7.Nb3 Be7 8.0-0 0-0 9.f4 a5 10.a4 Nb4 11.Kh1 Be6 12.f5 Bd7 13.Bg5**.

7...h6 8.0-0 Be7 9.Re1 0-0 10.h3 Another variation is

10.Bf1 Bg4 11.h3 Bh5 12.Be2 Bg6 13.Bd3.

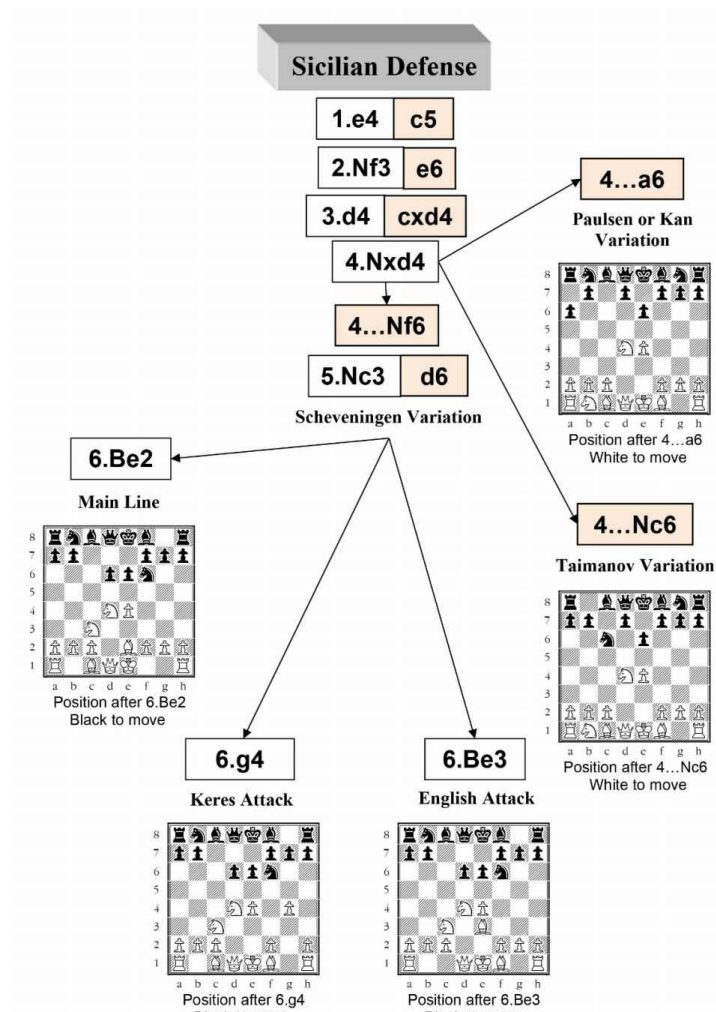
10...Be6 11.Bf1 Nb8 Other moves Black can choose are 11...Rc8, 11...Qa5, or 11...Qd7.

12.a4 Nbd7 13.a5 a6 14.Nd5 Nxd5 15.exd5 Bf5 with an asymmetrical pawn structure.



Both players are safely castled kingside.

White needs to develop the bishops while Black plans ...Rc8 to put pressure on the half-open c-file.



Scheveningen Variation

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 is the Scheveningen Variation of the Sicilian Defense named for the seaside town of Scheveningen located near The Hague in the Netherlands where it gained international attention in 1923.

Black's modest e6-d6 pawn center creates a solid defensive barrier with the flexibility to play ...e5 or ...d5 in the future.

The Four Knights Variation, 5...Nc6 6.Ndb5 Bb4 7.a3 Bxc3+ 8.Nxc3 d5, is an alternate line for Black.



White's most common responses are 6.Be2 (Main Line), 6.g4 (Keres Attack), and 6.Be3 (English Attack).

Another possible line is 6.f4 a6 7.Qf3 Qb6 8.Nb3 Qc7 9.g4 b5 with Black playing on the queenside and White expanding on the kingside.

6.Be2

This is the Main Line of the Scheveningen Variation of the Sicilian Defense.

6...Be7 Another possible line for Black is 6...a6 7.0-0 Be7 8.f4 Qc7 9.Kh1 0-0.

7.0-0 0-0 8.Be3 8.f4 Nc6 9.Be3 a6 10.a4 slows Black's queenside expansion.

8...Nc6 9.f4 a6 10.a4 10.Qe1 Qc7 11.Qg3 is an aggressive alternative for White.

10...Qc7 11.Kh1 moving the king further from the center before pushing the pawn to g4.

11...Re8 12.Bf3 Rb8 12...Bf8 and 12...Bd7 are alternatives for Black.

13.g4 Nxd4 14.Bxd4 e5 15.fxe5 dxe5 16.Ba7 Ra8 17.g5 Rd8 18.Qe2 Ne8 19.Be3 Be6 20.Qf2 avoiding the skewer threat of 20...Bc4 and threatening to skewer Black's queen and rook with 21.Bb6.



White has attacking chances on the kingside while Black focuses attention on the center and queenside.

6.g4

The most aggressive line against the Scheveningen is 6.g4, called the Keres Attack named for 20th century Estonian Grandmaster Paul Keres.

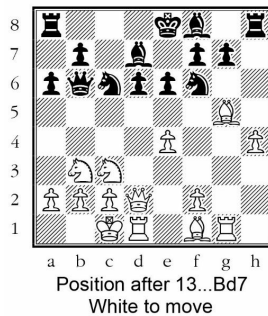
White attacks quickly on the kingside with pawns before developing the bishops.

6...h6 7.h4 7.Bg2 and 7.h3 are options for White.

7...Nc6 8.Rg1 h5 8...d5 9.exd5 Nxd5 10.Nxd5 Qxd5
opening up the center is another option for Black.

9.gxh5 White can also play 9.g5 Ng4 10.Be2.

**9...Nxe5 10.Bg5 Nf6 11.Qd2 Qb6 12.Nb3 a6 13.0-0-0
Bd7**



Black can attack on the queenside, utilizing the half-open c-file, and leave the king in the center where he is safer than on the kingside.

White has active pieces and will look for ways to open the center to attack Black's king.

6.Be3

6.Be3 is called the English Attack of the Scheveningen Variation, which has similar ideas to the Yugoslav Attack in the Sicilian Dragon where White plans to castle queenside and launch a pawn storm on the kingside with idea of f2-f3, g2-g4, and h2-h4.

6...a6 6...Be7 and 6...Nc6 are also commonly played.

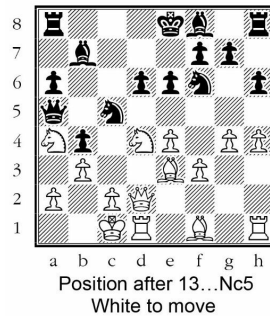
7.f3 b5 expanding quickly on the queenside.

8.g4 White can also play 8.Qd2 Nbd7 (or 8...Bb7 9.0-0-0

Nbd7 10.g4 Nb6 11.Qf2 Nfd7) 9.g4 Nb6 10.a4.

8...h6 8...Bb7 9.g5 Nfd7 10.a3 Nb6 11.Qd2 N8d7 12.f4 Nc5 13.Bd3 d5 is another variation for Black.

9.Qd2 Bb7 10.0-0-0 Nbd7 11.h4 b4 12.Na4 Qa5 13.b3 Nc5

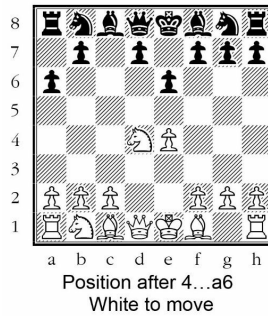


Black delayed castling and may keep the king in the center, while still planning to attack White's king on the queenside.

White has more space on the kingside and in the center with pressure on the d-file.

Paulsen or Kan Variation

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 has been called both the Paulsen Variation after 19th century German chess master and theoretician Louis Paulsen and the Kan Variation after 20th century Russian International Master Ilya Kan.



4...a6 keeps Black's position flexible. Black's dark-squared bishop isn't committed and the g8 knight doesn't go to f6 immediately. It also prevents Nb5 and prepares for a possible ...b5, expanding on the queenside.

5.Bd3 Other variations White can consider are 5.Nc3 Qc7 6.Bd3 Nf6 7.0-0 or 5.c4 Nf6 6.Nc3 Bb4 7.Bd3 Nc6 8.Nc2 Bxc3+ 9.bxc3.

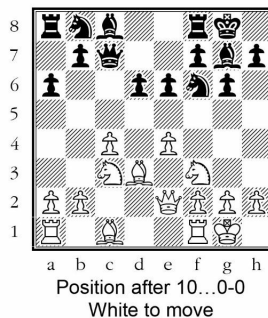
5...Nf6 Another line for Black is 5...Bc5 6.Nb3 Be7 7.Qg4 g6 8.Qe2 d6.

6.0-0 Qc7 preventing 7.e5. Black can also play 6...d6 7.c4 b6 8.Nc3 Bb7 or 6...e5 7.Nf3 Nc6 8.Nc3 Bc5.

7.Qe2 White can also play 7.c4 or 7.Nc3.

7...d6 further preventing 8.e5.

8.c4 g6 9.Nc3 Bg7 10.Nf3 0-0



Both players are safely castled kingside.

White can play 11.Bf4, 11.Rd1, or 11.h3.

Black needs to develop the queenside pieces.

Taimanov Variation

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 is the Taimanov Variation named for Russian Grandmaster Mark Taimanov who was a World Champion contender in 1953 and 1971.



5.Nc3 Another variation White can consider is 5.Nb5 d6 6.c4 Nf6 7.N1c3 a6 8.Na3 Be7 9.Be2 0-0 10.0-0 b6 11.Be3 Bb7 12.Qb3 Nd7 13.Rfd1.

5...a6 5...Qc7 and 5...d6 are alternatives for Black.

6.Be2 Other moves White can play are 6.Nxc6, 6.Be3, and 6.g3.

6...Qc7 Another line for Black is 6...d6 7.0-0 Nf6 8.Be3 Be7 9.f4 0-0.

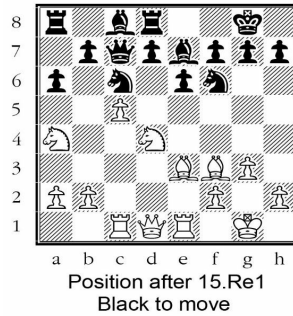
7.0-0 Nf6 8.Be3 Bb4 Black can also play 8...Be7 9.f4 d6 10.a4 0-0 11.Kh1 Re8.

9.Na4 0-0 Black can retreat the bishop with 9...Be7 10.Nxc6 bxc6 11.Nb6 Rb8 12.Nxc8 Qxc8 13.Bd4 c5 14.Be5 Rb6.

10.c4 10.Nxc6 bxc6 11.Nb6 Rb8 12.Nxc8 Rfxc8 13.Bxa6 Rf8 14.Bd3 Bd6 15.g3 Be5 16.a4 Bxb2 is another possible

line.

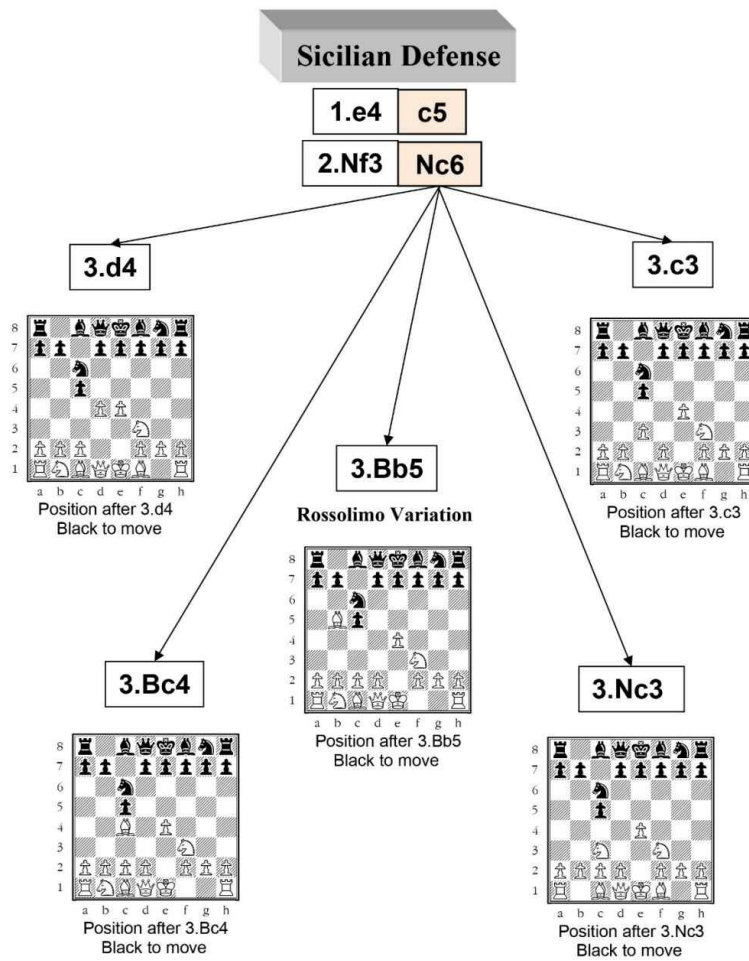
**10...Bd6 11.g3 Nxe4 12.c5 Be7 13.Rc1 Rd8 14.Bf3 Nf6
15.Re1**



Both players are safely castled kingside.

White sacrificed a pawn to control the center and some key squares on the queenside.

Black still needs to develop the light-squared bishop and queenside rook.



1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6

This section covers variations that are unique to **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6**.



Move orders in the Sicilian Defense often transpose; we have already covered variations when Black plays 2...d6 and 2...e6 where ...Nc6 is played after 3.d4.

Along with the commonly played 3.d4, White's four other main responses are 3.Bc4, 3.Bb5, 3.Nc3, and 3.c3.

3.d4

After **3...cxd4 4.Nxd4**, Black's main responses (other than 4...d6 and 4...e6) are 4...Nf6, 4...e5, and 4...g6.

4...Nf6

5.Nc3 e5 is called the Sveshnikov Variation named after Russian Grandmaster Evgeny Sveshnikov in the 1970s. Originally it was called the Lasker-Pelikan Variation.

6.Ndb5 d6 7.Bg5 a6 8.Na3 b5 9.Bxf6 Another option for White is **9.Nd5 Be7 10.Bxf6 Bxf6 11.c4 b4 12.Nc2 a5 13.g3**

0-0 14.h4 Be6 15.Bh3.

9...gxf6 10.Nd5 f5 challenging White's pawn center.
Another option for Black is 10...Bg7 11.Bd3 Ne7 12.Nxe7 Qxe7 13.0-0 0-0 14.c4 f5 15.Qf3 d5 16.cxd5 fxe4 17.Bxe4 Rb8.

11.Bd3 Be6 12.0-0 Another variation is 12.c3 Bg7 13.Nxb5 axb5 14.Bxb5 Bd7 15.exf5 0-0 16.0-0 e4 17.a4 where White has three pawns for a bishop.

12...Bxd5 13.exd5 Ne7



The players have opposite-colored bishops.

Ideas for White include 14.c3 and 14.Qh5.

Black plans to fianchetto the bishop and play ...e4 to restrict White's light-squared bishop and open up the a1-h8 diagonal.

4...e5

5.Nb5 d6, similar to the Sveshnikov Variation, is called the Kalashnikov Variation.

For Black the difference is the kingside knight may develop to e7, avoiding Bg5 and Bxf6 doubling the f-pawns. Black can also delay bringing out the knight and play ...f5 or ...Be7-g5.

6.N1c3 White also frequently plays 6.c4 (the Maróczy

Bind, see below) 6...Be7 7.N1c3 a6 8.Na3 Be6 9.Nc2 Bg5 10.Bxg5 Qxg5 11.h4 Qd8 12.Qd2.

6...a6 7.Na3 b5 8.Nd5 Nge7 9.c4 Nd4 Black can also play 9...Nxd5 10.cxd5 Nd4 11.Bd3 g6 12.0-0 Bg7.

10.cxb5 Nxd5 11.exd5 Be7 12.Bd3



Both players plan to castle kingside and need to develop the queenside bishops.

Black has an extra center pawn with more control of the center, while White has a queenside pawn majority.

4...g6

This is the Accelerated Dragon with Black planning to fianchetto the kingside bishop. Instead of moving the pawn from d7-d6 and then later to d5, Black hopes to save a tempo and eventually play d7-d5.

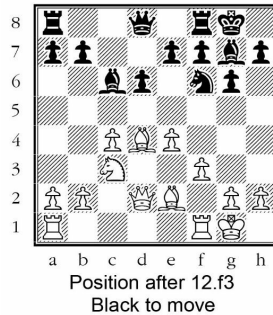
5.c4 is called the Maróczy Bind after late 19th and early 20th century Hungarian Grandmaster Géza Maróczy. White's main alternative is 5.Nc3 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Bc4 0-0 8.Bb3 followed by castling kingside.

The Maróczy Bind, which impedes ...d7-d5 and ...b7-b5, also occurs in the Symmetrical Variation of the English Opening after 1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6

5.Nc3 followed by 6.e4.

5...Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Nc3 0-0 7...Ng4 8.Qxg4 Nxd4
9.Qd1 Ne6 10.Rc1 Qa5 is another option for Black.

8.Be2 d6 9.0-0 Bd7 10.Qd2 Nxd4 11.Bxd4 Bc6 12.f3
securing the e4 pawn and blunting Black's light-squared
bishop on the h1-a8 diagonal.



Both players are safely castled.

White has a space advantage in the center.

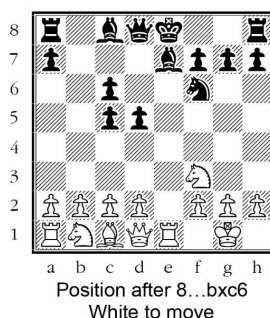
Black can move the knight to d7 and then c5 as well as
playing ...a5 to prevent White from playing b4.

3.Bc4

After **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6**, **3.Bc4** is a natural developing move that is seen more frequently in games between amateur players than masters.

3...e6 4.0-0 d5 4...a6 5.c3 b5 6.Bb3 gives Black more space on the queenside. Black then needs to develop the kingside pieces and plans to castle kingside. White intends to play d4 to expand in the center before developing the queenside pieces.

5.exd5 exd5 6.Re1+ Be7 7.Bb5 Nf6 8.Bxc6+ bxc6



White has a superior pawn structure and can play d3 or d4 and then develop the queenside pieces.

Black has the bishop pair and intends to castle kingside.

3.Bb5

This is called the Rossolimo Variation named after 20th century Russian-born Grandmaster Nicolas Rossolimo.

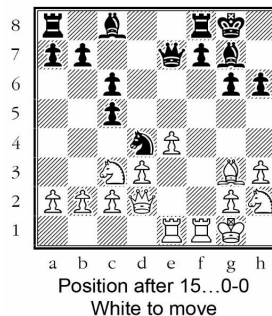
3...g6 Another line for Black is 3...d6 4.Bxc6+ bxc6 5.0-0 Bg4 6.h3 Bh5 7.e5 e6 8.exd6 Bxd6 giving Black the bishop pair but isolated pawns on the queenside. Black can also play 3...e6.

4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.d3 Bg7 6.h3 Nf6 Another variation for Black is 6...e5 7.Be3 Qe7 8.Qd2 Nf6 9.Bh6 0-0.

7.Nc3 Nd7 8.Be3 e5 9.Qd2 h6 10.0-0 Qe7 11.Nh2 preparing 12.f4.

11...Nf8 heading to d4 via e6.

12.f4 exf4 13.Bxf4 Ne6 14.Bg3 Nd4 15.Rae1 0-0



Both players are safely castled kingside.

Black has the bishop pair.

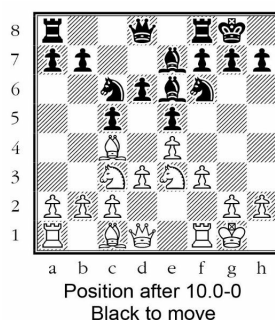
White has a superior pawn structure with more center pawns and a half-open f-file for the rook.

3.Nc3

3...e5 preventing White from playing 4.d4 but creating a hole on d5. After 3...e6, 3...Nf6, or 3...g6, White can play 4.d4 and transpose into the Open Sicilian.

4.Bc4 Be7 5.d3 d6 6.Nd2 Another variation is 6.0-0 Nf6 7.Ng5 0-0 8.f4 Bg4 9.Qe1 exf4 10.Bxf4 Nd4 11.Qd2 Qd7 12.Be3 h6 13.Nf3 Nxf3 14.gxf3 Be6 where White has more pawns in the center but an exposed king.

6...Nf6 7.Nf1 Bg4 8.f3 Be6 9.Ne3 0-0 10.0-0



Both players are safely castled and the position is relatively locked up in a strategic maneuvering battle.

White is planning Ncd5 and f4, expanding on the kingside.

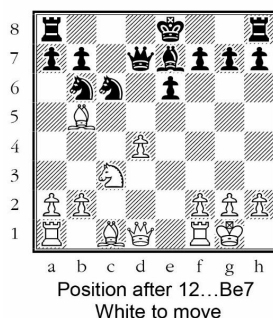
Black can play ...Nd7 with the idea of ...Bg5 to trade the bad dark-squared bishop.

3.c3

3...Nf6 Another variation is 3...d5 4.exd5 Qxd5 5.d4 Bg4 6.Be2 e6 7.h3 Bh5 8.c4 forcing Black's queen to move again. Both players still have pieces to develop and plan on castling kingside.

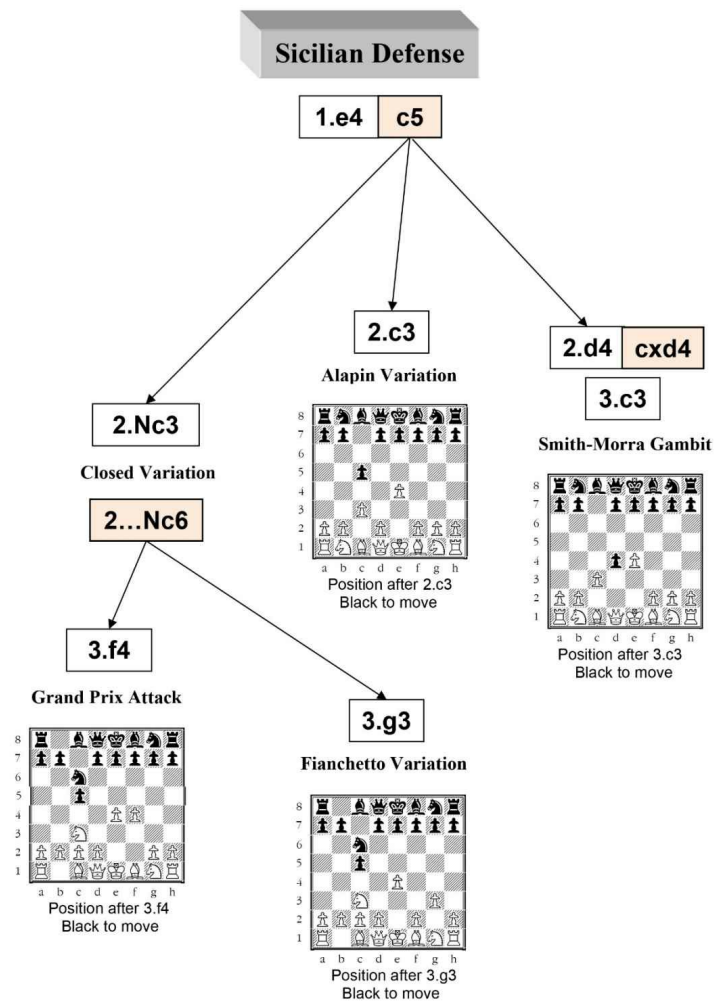
4.e5 Nd5 5.d4 cxd4 6.cxd4 d6 7.Bc4 Nb6 Black's knight moving across the board to b6 bears resemblance to Alekhine's Defense.

8.Bb5 dxe5 9.Nxe5 Bd7 10.Nxd7 Qxd7 11.Nc3 e6 12.0-0 Be7



White has a bishop pair in a fairly open position but an isolated pawn on d4.

Black plans on castling kingside and wants to control the d5 square in front of the weak isolated d4 pawn.



Closed Variation

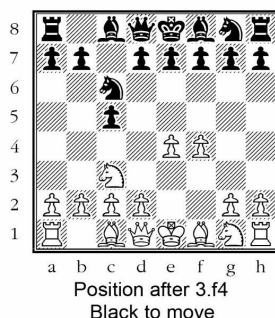
1.e4 c5 2.Nc3, where White doesn't play 2.Nf3 and 3.d4, is called the Closed Sicilian.

After 2...Nc6, White has two main choices: 3.f4 is the Grand Prix Attack and 3.g3 is the Fianchetto Variation.

Grand Prix Attack

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4 is called the Grand Prix Attack.

1.e4 c5 2.f4 is another way for White to play the Grand Prix Attack, but gives Black the option to play 2...d5 3.exd5 Nf6, referred to as the Tal Gambit named for the 8th World Champion Mikhail Tal.



White plans to castle, expand, and attack on the kingside. Sometimes White attacks Black's king when Black castles kingside with Qe1 and then Qh4.

3...g6 Another choice for Black is 3...e6 4.Nf3 d5 5.Bb5 Nge7 6.exd5 exd5 7.Qe2 Qd6.

4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bb5 An alternative variation for White is 5.Bc4 e6 6.f5 Nge7 7.fxe6.

5...Nd4 6.0-0 White can also play 6.Bc4 or 6.Nxd4.

6...Nxb5 7.Nxb5 d5 Black can also play 7...Nf6 8.d3 0-0 or 7...d6 8.d3 a6.

8.e5 8.exd5 a6 9.Nc3 Nf6 10.d4 is another variation for White.

8...d4 9.c3 a6 10.Na3



White has a lead in development and has castled but still needs to develop the dark-squared bishop and move the poorly placed knight on a3 back toward the center.

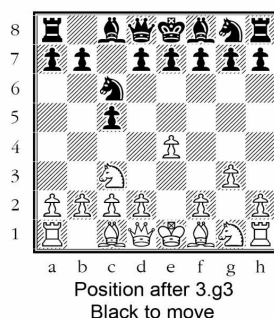
Black has a space advantage on the queenside and the bishop pair.

Black plans to move the knight to f5 via h6 and castle kingside.

Fianchetto Variation

A quieter and simpler variation for White is the Fianchetto Variation which begins **1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3**.

Alternatives for White are 3.Nf3 often followed by 4.d4 leading back into the Open Sicilian or 3.Bb5 resembling the Rossolimo Variation.



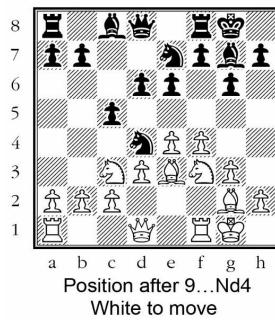
White generates chances on the kingside by castling there and often expanding with f4 possibly followed by the idea of g4 and f5.

Black can expand on the queenside where, like most variations in the Sicilian, Black has a space advantage due to the pawn on c5.

3...g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.d3 d6 6.f4 White can also play 6.Be3 e6 7.Qd2 Nge7 8.Bh6 Bxh6 9.Qxh6 Nd4 10.0-0-0 or 6.Nge2 e5 7.0-0 Nge7 8.Be3 0-0 9.a3 Be6 10.Rb1.

6...e6 Black can also play 6...e5 7.Nh3 exf4 8.Bxf4 Nge7 9.0-0 0-0 or 6...Nf6 7.Nf3 0-0 8.0-0 Rb8 9.h3 b5 10.g4 b4.

7.Nf3 Nge7 8.0-0 0-0 9.Be3 Nd4 with the idea of supporting the knight with ...Nec6.

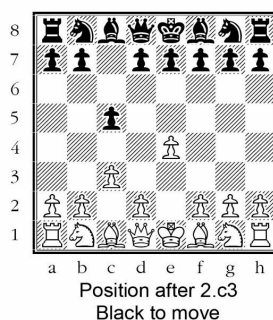


White has more space on the kingside while Black has more space on the queenside.

Possible variations White can choose are:
 10.e5 Nef5 11.Bf2 Nxf3+ 12.Qxf3 Nd4 13.Qd1,
 10.Qd2 Rb8 11.Rae1 b5 12.Nh4 b4 13.Nd1, or
 10.Rb1 Rb8 11.Ne2 Nxf3+ 12.Bxf3 b6 13.c3.

Alapin Variation

1.e4 c5 2.c3 is called the Alapin Variation named for late 19th and early 20th century Russian master, opening analyst, and puzzle composer, Semyon Alapin.



The idea behind 2.c3 is to play 3.d4 and after 3...cxd4 recapture with the c-pawn instead of the kingside knight in order to control the center with more pawns.

The move order 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.c3 is called the Delayed Alapin. A sample variation is 3...Nf6 4.Be2 Nbd7 5.d3 b6 6.0-0 Bb7 7.Nbd2 g6 8.Re1 Bg7 9.Bf1.

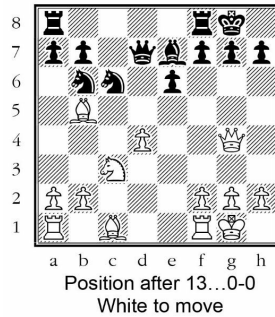
2...Nf6 Black can also strike in the center with 2...d5 3.exd5 Qxd5 4.d4 Nf6 5.Nf3 Bg4 6.Be2 e6 7.h3 Bh5 8.0-0 Nc6 9.Be3 cxd4 10.Nxd4 Bxe2 11.Qxe2 Be7 12.Rd1 0-0.

3.e5 Nd5 resembling Alekhine's Defense.

4.d4 cxd4 5.cxd4 An alternative for White is 5.Qxd4 e6 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Qe4 f5 8.Qe2 Qc7 9.g3 b5 10.Bg2 a5 11.0-0.

5...d6 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Bc4 Nb6 8.Bb5 White can also play 8.Bb3 dxe5 9.d5 Na5 10.Nc3.

8...dxe5 9.Nxe5 Bd7 10.Nxd7 Qxd7 11.Nc3 e6 12.0-0 Be7 13.Qg4 0-0



Both players are safely castled kingside.

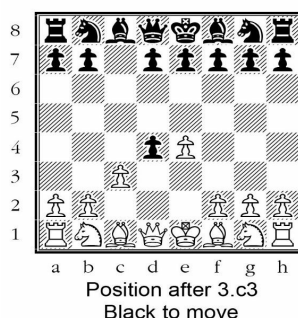
White has the bishop pair but a weak isolated pawn on d4 that is threatened by Black's queen.

Black developed the minor pieces and plans to move the rooks to c8 and d8.

A possible continuation is 14.Bxc6 bxc6 15.Bh6 Bf6 16.Rfd1 leaving both players with isolated pawns.

Smith-Morra Gambit

1.e4 c5 2.d4 cxd4 3.c3 is called the Smith-Morra Gambit (called the Morra Gambit in Europe), named for 20th century masters Pierre Morra of France and Ken Smith of the United States.



White offers a pawn to gain a lead in development.

The gambit is more popular at the amateur level than the master level, where there is more respect for the value of a central pawn.

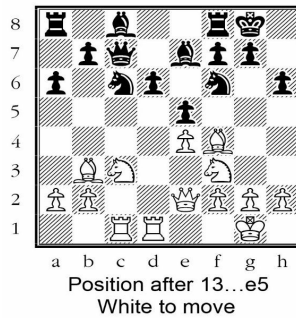
3...dxc3 Black can decline the gambit with 3...d3 4.Bxd3 Nc6 5.Nf3 d6 6.h3 g6 7.0-0 Bg7 or 3...Nf6 4.e5 Nd5 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Bc4 Nb6 7.Bb3 d5 8.exd6 Qxd6. Black can also play a Scandinavian type of variation with 3...d5 4.exd5 Qxd5 5.cxd4 giving White an isolated pawn, but creating a position where White will develop the pieces quicker.

4.Nxc3 Nc6 Another variation is 4...e6 5.Nf3 a6 6.Bc4 b5 7.Bb3 Bb7.

5.Nf3 d6 Black can also play 5...e6 6.Bc4 a6 7.0-0 Nge7 8.Bg5 f6 or 5...g6 6.Bc4 Bg7 7.0-0 Nh6 8.Bf4 0-0.

6.Bc4 e6 A Scheveningen pawn formation. Another option for Black is 6...a6 7.0-0 Nf6 8.Bf4 Bg4.

7.0-0 Nf6 8.Qe2 a6 9.Bg5 Be7 10.Rfd1 Qc7 11.Rac1 0-0 12.Bb3 h6 13.Bf4 e5

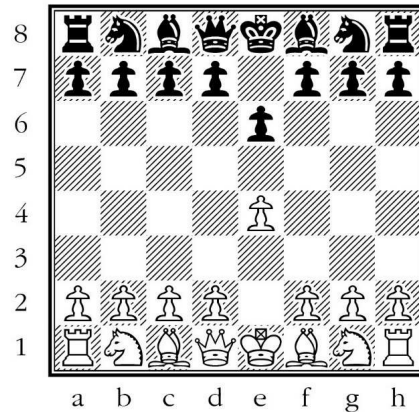


Both players are safely castled kingside.

All White's pieces are developed.

Black is ahead by a pawn but has a weak backward pawn on d6 and a bad bishop on e7.
Black's queen on c7 is in line with White's rook on c1 on the c-file.

French Defense



Position after 1...e6
White to move

The French Defense, **1.e4 e6**, is named after a correspondence match held in 1834 between the cities of Paris and London.

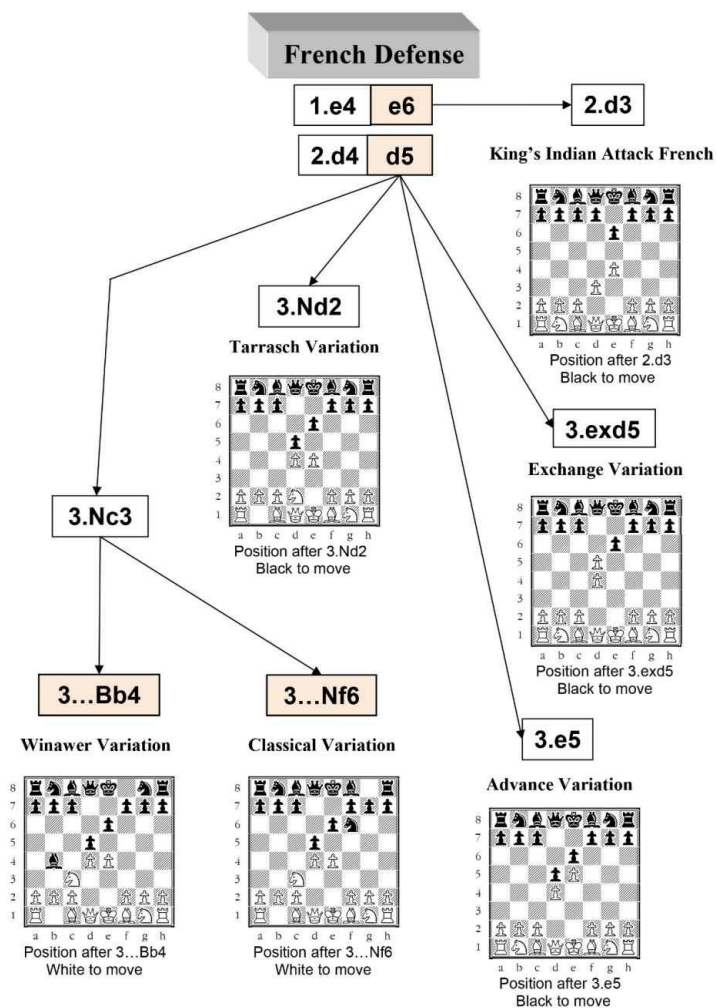
Pawn arrows are a common theme in many variations of the French Defense when White's pawns are on d4 and e5 and Black's pawns are on e6 and d5.

With this pawn structure, White usually wants the action to take place on the kingside, where there is more space, while Black focuses on the queenside after playing ...c5.

Black usually has a slightly more cramped position on the kingside and the light-squared bishop on c8 is often blocked by the center pawns.

After 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5, White's main choices are 3.Nc3 leading to the Winawer or Classical Variation, 3.Nd2 (Tarrasch Variation), 3.e5 (Advance Variation), and 3.exd5 (Exchange Variation).

White can also play 2.d3, the King's Indian Attack French.



Winawer Variation

The Winawer Variation, **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4**, is named for Polish chess player Szymon Winawer who won the German Chess Championship in 1883.

3...Bb4 pins White's knight to the king, taking away the knight's protection of the e4 pawn.

Black can also play the Rubinstein Variation, 3...dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Nf3 Ngf6 6.Nxf6+ Nxf6 or 3...Nc6 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.e5 Ne4.



4.e5 Also playable are 4.exd5, 4.Nge2, and 4.a3.

4...c5 attacking the d4 pawn, the base of White's pawn arrow. Black can delay moving the c-pawn and play 4...Ne7, 4...b6, or 4...Qd7.

5.a3 Other variations for White are 5.Bd2 Ne7 6.Nb5 Bxd2+ 7.Qxd2 0-0 8.f4 and 5.Qg4 Ne7 6.dxc5 Nbc6 7.Bd2 0-0 8.0-0-0.

5...Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 Alternatives for Black are 6...Qa5 7.Bd2 Qa4, 6...Qc7 7.Qg4 f5, and 6...Nc6 7.Qg4 g6.

7.Qg4 White can also play the positional 7.Nf3 Nbc6 8.a4 Qa5 9.Bd2 (or 9.Qd2).

7...Qc7 Another variation is 7...0-0 8.Bd3 Nbc6 9.Nf3 (or 9.Qh5 Ng6) 9...f5 10.exf6 Rxf6.

8.Qxg7 An alternative is 8.Bd3.

8...Rg8 9.Qxh7 cxd4 10.Ne2 Nbc6 Black can also play

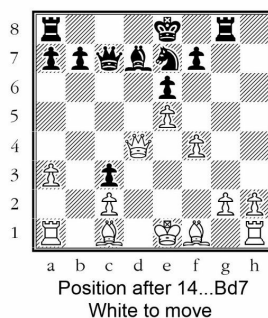
10...dxc3 11.f4 Bd7.

11.f4 dxc3 12.Qd3 Also playable are 12.h4 and 12.Nxc3.

12...d4 Black can also develop with 12...Bd7.

13.Nxd4 Alternatives are 13.h4 and 13.Ng3.

13...Nxd4 14.Qxd4 Bd7



Black sacrificed a pawn for a lead in development and plans to castle queenside.

Black's knight can move to f5 to attack the queen.

White has a bishop pair and an outside passed pawn on h4 but needs to find safety for the king and develop the bishops and rooks.

Classical Variation

The Classical Variation of the French Defense is **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6**.

Black develops the knight to f6 to attack White's e4 pawn a second time.



4.Bg5 White can also play the Steinitz Variation, 4.e5 Nfd7 5.f4 c5 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Be3.

4...Be7 Black can also play the MacCutcheon Variation, 4...Bb4 5.e5 h6 6.Bd2 Bxc3 7.bxc3 Ne4 8.Qg4 g6, or the Burn Variation, 4...dxe4 5.Nxe4 Be7 6.Bxf6 Bxf6 (or 6...gxf6).

5.e5 Nfd7 6.Bxe7 White can offer a pawn for attacking prospects on the kingside by playing the Alekhine-Chatard Attack, 6.h4 Bxg5 7.hxg5 Qxg5 8.Qd3 g6 9.Nf3 Qe7 10.0-0-0.

6...Qxe7 7.f4 expanding on the kingside in the direction of the pawn arrow. White can also play 7.Qd2 or 7.Nb5.

7...0-0 Other options for Black are 7...a6 and 7...Nb6.

8.Nf3 Another idea for White is 8.Qg4 f5 9.exf6 Nxf6 10.Qh4.

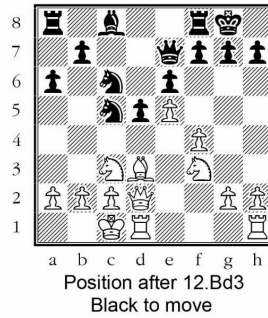
8...c5 expanding on the queenside in the direction of Black's pawn arrow.

9.Qd2 preparing to castle queenside. An alternative is 9.dxc5 Nc6 10.Bd3 Nxc5 11.0-0.

9...Nc6 10.dxc5 Nxc5 10...Qxc5 is also playable.

11.0-0-0 a6 preparing 12...b5 and preventing White's knight from moving to b5.

12.Bd3 completing the minor piece development.



The players castled on opposite sides. White would like to attack on the kingside while Black would like to expand and attack on the queenside.

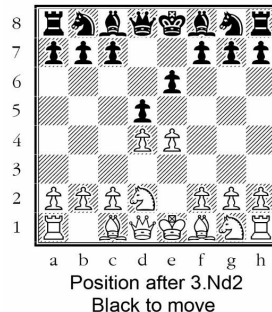
Black's light-squared bishop is blocked by pawns.

White will likely move the king to b1 to get off of the half-open c-file.

Tarrasch Variation

The Tarrasch Variation, **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2**, is named for German chess master and theoretician Siegbert Tarrasch of the late 19th and early 20th century.

Although the knight temporarily blocks the c1 bishop, 3.Nd2 defends the e4 pawn and maintains the possibility of supporting the d4 pawn by moving the c2 pawn to c3.



3...Nf6 Other options for Black are 3...c5 4.exd5 Qxd5 5.Ngf3 cxd4, 3...Be7 4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.e5 Nfd7 6.Bd3 c5, and 3...Nc6 4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.e5 Nd7 6.Be2 f6.

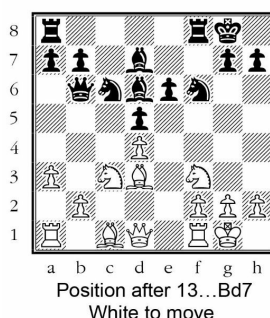
4.e5 Nfd7 5.Bd3 The main alternative for White is 5.f4 c5 6.c3 Nc6 7.Ndf3 Qb6 8.g3 cxd4 9.cxd4 Bb4+ 10.Kf2 with the idea of castling by hand.

5...c5 6.c3 Nc6 7.Ne2 cxd4 8.cxd4 Qb6 the natural square for the queen attacking the b2 and d4 pawns. Another idea for Black is 8...f6 9.exf6 Qxf6.

9.Nf3 f6 attempting to undermine White's pawn center by attacking the front pawn of the pawn arrow.

10.exf6 Nxf6 11.0-0 Bd6 12.Nc3 White can also play 12.b3 or 12.Bf4.

12...0-0 13.a3 Bd7 completing the minor piece development and connecting the rooks.



Black has a weak backward pawn on e6 and a hole on e5, but White has an isolated pawn on d4.

Black has a half-open f-file for the rook and Black's queen eyes the d4 and b2 pawns.

Black's light-squared bishop is passive.

White's d4 pawn is attacked twice, defended by the knight on f3 and indirectly by the queen.

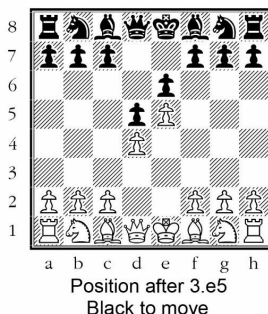
White often expands on the queenside with b4 and focuses on attacking the backward pawn on e6.

Advance Variation

The Advance Variation, **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5**, is sometimes referred to as the Nimzowitsch Advance French named for the Latvian-born Danish chess master and writer Aron Nimzowitsch of the late 19th and early 20th century.

White's pawn arrow consists of d4 and e5 pointing to the kingside, and Black's arrow of e6 and d5 is pointing to the queenside.

White would like the action to take place on the kingside where White has more space, while Black would like the battle to occur on the queenside for the same reason.



3...c5 4.c3 Nc6 Black can consider playing 4...Qb6 or 4...Bd7.

5.Nf3 Qb6 developing the queen early to a square where she cannot easily be attacked, while attacking both the b2 and d4 pawns. An alternative is 5...Bd7 6.Be2 Nge7 7.Na3 cxd4 8.cxd4 Nf5 9.Nc2 Qb6.

6.Be2 Other variations White can play are 6.Bd3 cxd4 7.cxd4 Bd7 8.0-0 Nxd4 9.Nxd4 Qxd4 10.Nc3 and 6.a3 Nh6

(6...c4 7.Nbd2 f6 8.Be2) 7.b4 cxd4 8.cxd4 Nf5 9.Bb2.

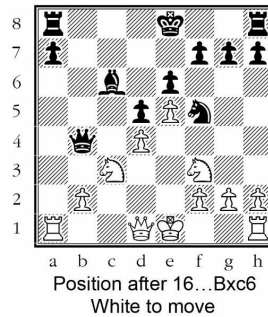
6...cxd4 An alternative for Black is 6...Nh6 7.Bxh6 gxh6 8.Qd2 Bg7 9.0-0 0-0.

7.cxd4 Nh6 Another variation is 7...Nge7 8.Na3 Nf5 9.Nc2 Be7.

8.Nc3 White can also play 8.Bd3 Bd7 9.Bc2.

8...Nf5 9.Na4 Qa5+ 10.Bd2 Bb4 11.Bc3 b5 12.a3 Bxc3+ 13.Nxc3 b4 14.axb4 White can consider 14.Nb5 bxa3+ 15.Kf1 with the ideas of 16.Rxa3 or 16.g4.

14...Qxb4 15.Bb5 Bd7 16.Bxc6 Bxc6



Both players plan on castling kingside.

Black has pressure on the half-open b-file but the bishop is restricted by pawns on the light squares.

White has the threat of g4 with attacking chances on the kingside.

The game might continue 17.Qd2 0-0 18.0-0 Rfb8 19.Rab1.

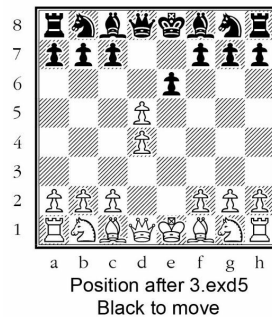
Exchange Variation

The Exchange Variation, **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5**, opens up the position and avoids the usual lines of the French Defense.

Black recaptures the pawn with **3...exd5** opening up the h3-c8 diagonal for the bishop and creating a symmetrical pawn structure.

As the pieces trade a drawish endgame position is possible due to the symmetrical pawn structure.

The most common imbalance occurs when the players castle on opposite sides.

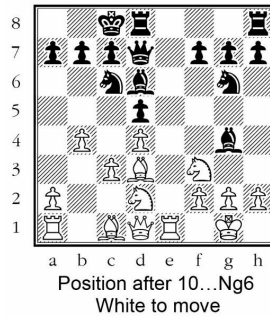


4.Bd3 A symmetrical position results after the natural 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.Bd3 Bd6 6.0-0 0-0 7.Bg5 Bg4 8.Nbd2 Nbd7 9.c3 c6. White can also open up the position with 4.c4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Be7 6.Nf3 0-0 7.Bd3 dxc4 8.Bxc4.

4...Nc6 5.c3 White can also choose to develop the knight with 5.Ne2.

5...Bd6 6.Nf3 6.Qf3 Be6 7.Ne2 is also playable.

6...Bg4 7.0-0 Nge7 8.Re1 Qd7 9.Nbd2 0-0-0 10.b4 Ng6 clearing e7 for the c6 knight after White attacks it by pushing the pawn to b5.



The players castled on opposite sides.

White plans to attack Black's king on the queenside by advancing the a- and b-pawns. White's d2 knight can head for c5 via b3.

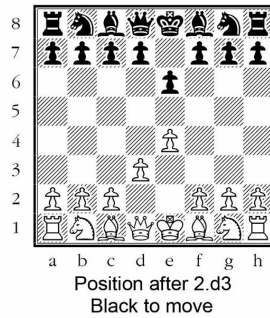
Since White hasn't moved any pawns (creating weaknesses) in front of the king, Black plans to primarily use the pieces to attack White's king.

Black's kingside knight often heads to h4 or f4 and the f7 pawn moves to f6 to keep White's knight off e5 and to support the g-pawn potentially advancing to g5 if White plays h3.

King's Indian Attack French

After **1.e4 e6**, White can choose to play **2.d3**, the King's Indian Attack French which mirrors Black's position in the King's Indian Defense with the colors reversed.

An alternative second move for White is **2.Nf3** possibly leading into the French Wing Gambit after **2...d5 3.e5 c5 4.b4**.



2...d5 3.Nd2 An alternative variation for White is 3.Qe2 Nf6 4.Nf3 Be7 5.g3 c5 6.Bg2 Nc6 7.0-0 0-0 8.e5 Nd7 9.c4.

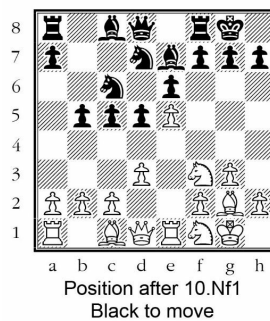
3...Nf6 Another line Black can play is 3...c5 4.Ngf3 Nc6 5.g3 Bd6 (or 5...g6 6.Bg2 Bg7) 6.Bg2 Nge7 7.0-0 0-0.

4.Ngf3 c5 Black can also play 4...b6 5.c3 c5 or 4...Nc6 5.c3 a5 6.e5 Nd7 7.d4 f6.

5.g3 Nc6 6.Bg2 Be7 Black can also fianchetto the bishop with 6...g6 7.0-0 Bg7.

7.0-0 0-0 Another idea for Black is 7...b6 8.Re1 Bb7.

8.Re1 b5 9.e5 Nd7 10.Nf1



Black has more space and plans to expand on the queenside.

As Black's pawns advance, White should avoid moving pawns on the queenside as this may give Black the initiative.

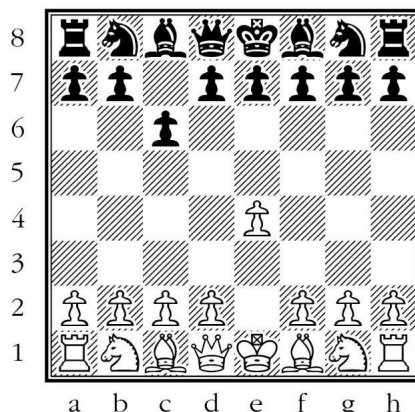
With White's e5 pawn in Black's territory, White plans on expanding on the kingside.

White typically attacks with Bf4, h4, N1h2.

Another idea is to move the f3 knight to g5 (after playing h4

to protect the g5 square) to allow the queen to move to h5 to threaten Black's king.

Caro-Kann Defense



Position after 1...c6
White to move

The Caro-Kann Defense, **1.e4 c6**, is named for English-born Horatio Caro, who spent most of his chess career in Germany, and Marcus Kann from Austria, who jointly published their analysis of the opening in the German *Br ü derschaft* magazine in 1886.

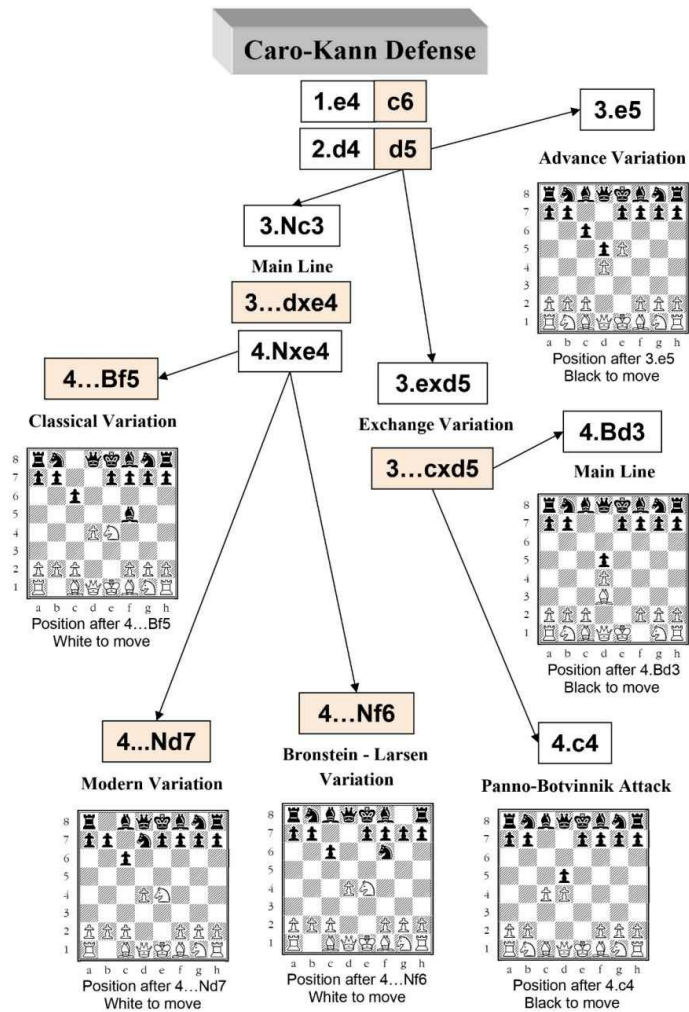
Black plays 1...c6 in order to challenge White's e4 pawn with 2...d5 without playing ...e6, blocking the light-squared bishop on the h3-c8 diagonal.

The Caro-Kann gives Black a patient and stubborn defensive position with a solid pawn structure that is hard for White to break.

The drawbacks for Black are White has more space and quicker development and the c7 pawn does not advance to c5 in one move.

White's goal is to make use of this extra space and mobility before Black can free up their position.

After 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5, White's three main variations are 3.Nc3 (Main Line), 3.exd5 (Exchange Variation), and 3.e5 (Advance Variation).



Main Line

The Main Line of the Caro-Kann is **1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4**. The same position often occurs if White plays 3.Nd2 instead of 3.Nc3.

An alternative for White on the second move is the Two Knights Variation, 1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3.



Black's main choices are 4...Bf5, 4...Nd7, and 4...Nf6.

4...Bf5

Black's oldest response, 4...Bf5, is called the Classical Variation (often referred to as the Capablanca Variation). Black develops the bishop before blocking the h3-c8 diagonal with ...e6.

5.Ng3 Bg6 6.h4 expanding on the kingside and threatening to trap the bishop. White can also develop the knight with 6.Nf3.

6...h6 7.Nf3 Nd7 Also playable for Black are 7...e6 and 7...Nf6.

8.h5 Bh7 9.Bd3 White can also play 9.Bc4 followed by 10.0-0.

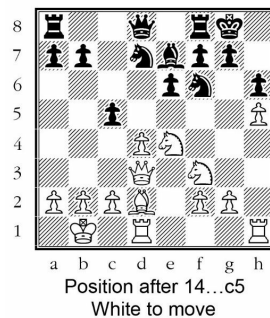
9...Bxd3 10.Qxd3 e6 Black can also play 10...Qc7 with

the idea of castling queenside.

11.Bd2 White can also play **11.Bf4**.

11...Ngf6 12.0-0-0 Be7 13.Kb1 Moving the king a square further from the center to the b-file is a common idea when a player castles queenside. Alternatives are **13.Qe2** and **13.Ne4**.

13...0-0 14.Ne4 c5 Black can also play **14...Nxe4** **15.Qxe4** **Nf6**.



Opposite side castling is the main theme where White wants to attack on the kingside and Black on the queenside.

White can play **15.g4**, offering a pawn to open the g-file for one of the rooks.

4...Nd7

4...Nd7 is a solid positional line known as the Modern Variation. It was once named the Steinitz Variation after the 1st World Champion. It has also been called the Smyslov Variation and the Karpov Variation after the 7th and 12th World Champions.

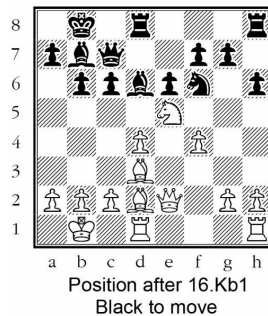
Black prepares **...Ngf6** to drive away or exchange White's centralized knight with the ability to recapture with a knight instead of doubling pawns if White trades knights on f6.

5.Ng5 White can also play 5.Nf3 or 5.Bc4.

5...Ngf6 6.Bd3 e6 Black can also plan to fianchetto the bishop with 6...g6.

7.N1f3 Bd6 8.Qe2 h6 9.Ne4 Nxe4 10.Qxe4 Nf6 11.Qe2 Qc7 11...c5 12.dxc5 Bxc5 results in an asymmetrical pawn structure. Black can also play 11...b6 with idea of 12...Bb7.

12.Bd2 b6 13.0-0-0 Bb7 14.Ne5 0-0-0 15.f4 Kb8 16.Kb1



Both players castled queenside and White has more space in the center.

Black plans to advance the c6 pawn to c5 to challenge the center and open the h1-a8 diagonal for the fianchettoed bishop.

4...Nf6

5.Nxf6+ gxf6 is the Bronstein-Larsen Variation named for 20th century Russian Grandmaster David Bronstein and Danish Grandmaster Bent Larsen. Black weakens the kingside pawn structure to open the g-file for the rook, resulting in sharp attacking positions where Black usually plans on castling queenside. Black can also play 5...exf6.

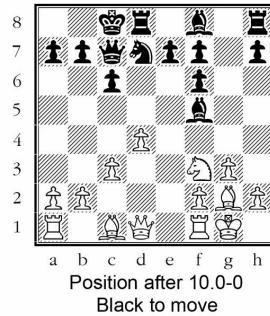
6.c3 White can also play 6.Nf3 or 6.Bc4.

6...Bf5 7.Nf3 Qc7 preparing to castle queenside and

preventing 8.Bf4. Black can also play 7...e6 or 7...Nd7.

8.g3 The long h1-a8 diagonal is the best diagonal for White's light-squared bishop.

8...Nd7 9.Bg2 0-0-0 10.0-0

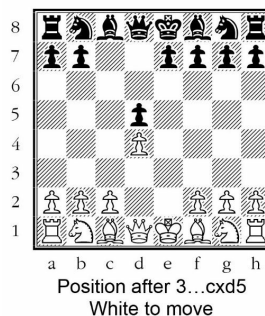


Opposite side castling is the main theme.

White plans to attack on the queenside by moving the pawn to b4 while Black attacks on the kingside with ...h5 and ...h4.

Exchange Variation

The Exchange Variation of the Caro-Kann is **1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5**, resulting in an asymmetrical pawn structure.



White's main choices are 4.c4, the Panno-Botvinnik

Attack named after the 20th and 21st century Argentine Grandmaster Oscar Panno and the 6th World Champion Mikhail Botvinnik, and the Main Line 4.Bd3.

4.c4

The Panno-Botvinnik Attack, advancing the c-pawn two squares, opens up the position. For the structural weakness of an isolated pawn on d4, White can develop rapidly, obtain a grip on e5, and gain attacking chances on the kingside.

4...Nf6 5.Nc3 e6 Black can also play 5...Nc6 or 5...g6.

6.Nf3 Bb4 Also playable are 6...Be7 and 6...Nc6.

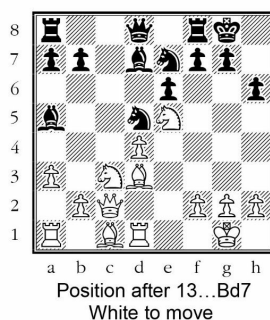
7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.Qc2 protecting the knight a second time.

8.Bd2 Nc6 9.Bd3 0-0 10.0-0 is an alternative line for White.

8...Nc6 9.Bd3 Ba5 10.a3 h6 Black wins a pawn but leaves the king exposed in the center after **10...Nxc3 11.bxc3 Nxd4 12.Nxd4 Qxd4 13.Bb5+ Bd7 14.0-0 Qd5 15.c4 Qf5 16.Bxd7+ Kxd7**.

11.0-0 0-0 12.Rd1 Nce7 supporting the d5 knight.

13.Ne5 Bd7



White has well-placed pieces that eye Black's castled king, but also a weak isolated d-pawn.

Black would like to exchange pieces to reduce White's attacking prospects.

4.Bd3

4.Bd3, preventing 4...Bf5, is the Main Line of the Exchange Variation.

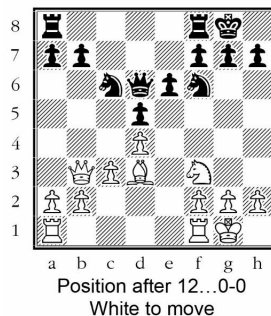
4...Nc6 5.c3 Nf6 is called the Rubinstein Variation named for the early 20th century Polish World Champion contender, Akiba Rubinstein. **5...Qc7 6.Ne2 Bg4 7.f3 Bd7 8.Bf4 e5 9.dxe5 Nxe5 10.0-0 Bd6** is an aggressive variation for Black that activates the pieces at the cost of an isolated d-pawn.

6.Bf4 Bg4 An alternative for Black is **6...g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.0-0 0-0**.

7.Qb3 Qd7 7...Qc8 is also playable for Black.

8.Nd2 e6 9.Ngf3 Bxf3 10.Nxf3 Bd6 11.Bxd6 Qxd6 12.0-0 Capturing the pawn with **12.Qxb7** runs into **12...Rb8** skewering White's queen and pawn on the b-file. After **13.Qa6 Rxb2** Black regains the pawn with an active rook on the 7th rank.

12...0-0



Both players are developed and safely castled.

White may develop the a1 rook to the half-open e-file and lift it to e3 in preparation for an attack on Black's king.

Black can play ...a6 followed by ...b5, planning a minority attack on the queenside.

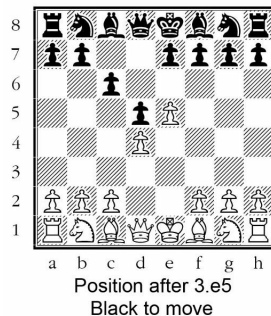
The game could continue 13.Rae1 Qc7 14.Qd1 Rab8 15.Re3 g6. Black has dark-squared weaknesses on the kingside, but White doesn't have a dark-squared bishop.

Advance Variation

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 is the Advance Variation of the Caro-Kann Defense.

Black plans to develop the light-squared bishop before playing e6 so the bishop does not get blocked by its own pawns.

Besides 3.Nc3, 3.exd5, and 3.e5, White has a couple other variations to consider that Black should be prepared for: 3.Nd2 (Modern Variation) and 3.f3 (Fantasy or Maróczy Variation).



3...Bf5 4.Nc3 is called the Van der Wiel Attack, named for 20th and 21st century Dutch Grandmaster John van der Wiel. Another line for White is 4.Nf3 e6 5.Be2. Black could then play 5...c5, moving the c-pawn a second time in order

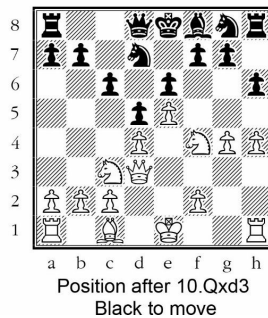
to attack on the queenside. 6.0-0 Nc6 7.c3 is similar to the Advance Variation of the French Defense, but with Black's light-square bishop developed outside the pawn chain.

4...e6 5.g4 With the pawn arrow pointing toward the kingside and center pawns locked, White can aggressively advance on the kingside, gaining time by attacking Black's bishop.

5...Bg6 6.Nge2 h6 preparing the h7 square for the bishop. Black can also play 6...c5, 6...f6, 6...Ne7, or 6...Nd7.

7.h4 Nd7 8.Nf4 Bh7 preserving the bishop pair.

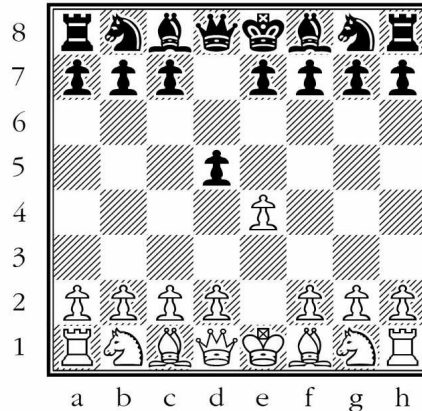
9.Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3



White typically develops the bishop to e3, castles queenside, and expands on the kingside with the space advantage.

Black may consider castling queenside, away from White's kingside attack. Black could also play ...c5 and expand in the direction of the pawn arrow, pointing to the queenside.

Scandinavian Defense



Position after 1...d5
White to move

The Scandinavian Defense (also called the Center Counter Game), **1.e4 d5**, is one of the oldest recorded openings dating back to the late 1400's.

1...d5 fights for the center with a direct assault on White's e-pawn. The result is often an open position where Black can develop pieces quickly.

The downside is that after 2.exd5, Black loses time recapturing the pawn on d5.

Black's two main responses are 2...Qxd5 allowing White to gain a tempo by attacking the queen with 3.Nc3 and 2...Nf6 with the idea of recapturing on d5 with the knight, moving the knight twice (and possibly three times if White attacks it with c4).

Depending on the variation, each player may end up castling on either side.

Scandinavian Defense

1.e4

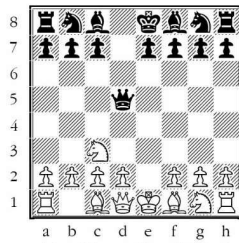
d5

2.exd5

2...Qxd5

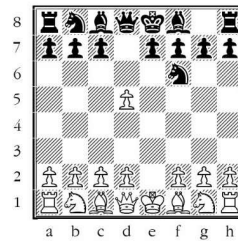
3.Nc3

Main Line



Position after 3.Nc3
Black to move

2...Nf6

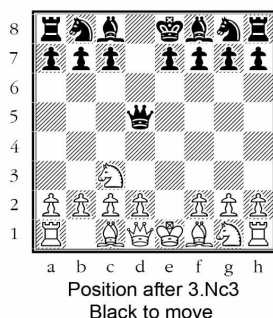


Position after 2...Nf6
White to move

Main Line

The Main Line of the Scandinavian Defense is **1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3**.

Less common third move alternatives for White are 3.Nf3 and 3.d4.



After 3.Nc3, Black's three main responses are 3...Qa5, 3...Qd8, and 3...Qd6.

3...Qa5

Deploying the queen to the edge of the board where it is difficult to attack her.

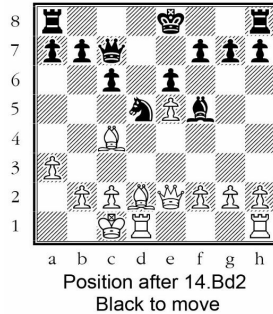
4.d4 Nf6 Also playable is 4...c6 clearing the a5-d8 diagonal for a possible queen retreat.

5.Nf3 c6 6.Bc4 Bf5 6...Bg4 is an alternative for Black.

7.Bd2 An aggressive alternative for White is 7.Ne5 e6 8.g4 Bg6 9.h4.

7...e6 8.Qe2 A balanced same side castling position occurs after 8.Nd5 Qd8 9.Nxf6+ gxf6 10.Bb3 Nd7 11.Qe2 Qc7 12.0-0-0 0-0-0.

8...Bb4 9.0-0-0 Nbd7 10.a3 Bxc3 11.Bxc3 Qc7 12.Ne5 Nxe5 13.dxe5 Nd5 14.Bd2



White has the bishop pair and a small space advantage in the center. White may choose to play for a space advantage on the kingside with g4 and f4 followed by f5.

Black has control of d5 and the option of castling to either side.

3...Qd8

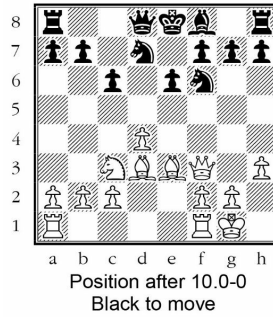
Retreating the queen to her home square is fairly popular with beginners who are taught to avoid bringing the queen out early.

4.d4 Nf6 5.Nf3 Natural developing moves 5.Bc4 and 5.Bg5 are other options for White.

5...Bg4 Playing 5...c6 to attack d5 is an alternative for Black.

6.h3 Bxf3 7.Qxf3 c6 8.Be3 e6 9.Bd3 White can also castle queenside.

9...Nbd7 10.0-0



White has developed minor pieces, a bishop pair, and a space advantage.

Black has a somewhat cramped, but solid position, and plans to develop the bishop and castle kingside.

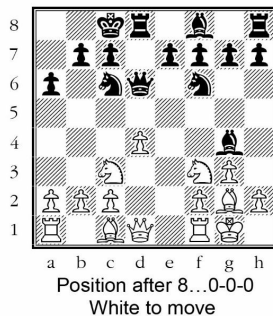
3...Qd6

Like 3...Qa5, Black keeps the queen developed by moving her to a square that is difficult for White to exploit.

4.d4 Nf6 5.Nf3 a6 preventing 6.Nb5 and 6.Bb5+ while threatening ...b5 and expanding on the queenside. Another variation for Black is 5...c6 6.Ne5 Nbd7 7.Nc4 Qc7 8.Qf3 Nb6 9.Bf4 Qd7 10.Nxb6 axb6 11.0-0-0 e6.

6.g3 Bg4 Black can also play 6...b5 7.Bg2 Bb7 8.0-0 e6 9.Bf4 Qb6 10.a4 Bd6.

7.Bg2 Nc6 8.0-0 0-0-0



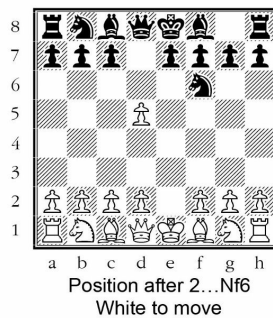
The kings are castled on opposite sides and White has a small space advantage in the center.

Black needs to develop the kingside bishop and rook.

White can force Black's queen to move again by developing the bishop to f4.

2...Nf6

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 is Black's main alternative to capturing the d5 pawn with the queen.



White's main responses are 3.d4 (or 3.Nf3), 3.Bb5+, and 3.c4.

3.d4

White can transpose moves to reach the **bold** text below with 3.Nf3 Nxd5 4.d4 g6.

3...Nxd5 Black can also play 3...Bg4 4.Nf3 Qxd5 5.Be2 Nc6 6.c4 Qh5 7.Be3 0-0-0.

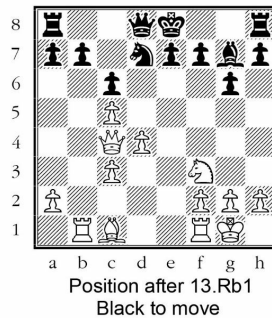
4.Nf3 White can also play 4.c4 Nb6 5.Nc3 e5 6.dxe5 Qxd1+ 7.Nxd1.

4...g6 An alternative line for Black is 4...Bg4 5.Be2 e6 6.0-0 Be7.

5.c4 An alternative variation for White is 5.Be2 Bg7 6.0-0 0-0 7.c4 Nb6 8.Nc3.

5...Nb6 6.Nc3 Bg7 7.c5 Nd5 8.Bc4 c6 9.0-0 Be6 10.Qb3 Nxc3 11.bxc3 strengthening the d4 pawn and opening up the b-file for the rook.

11...Bxc4 12.Qxc4 Nd7 13.Rb1



White has more space on the queenside and in the center.

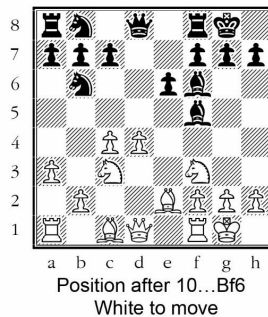
Black plans to castle kingside and fight for the e5 and/or d5 squares.

3.Bb5+

3...Bd7 Black can also play 3...Nbd7 4.c4 a6 5.Ba4 (or 5.Bxd7+ Qxd7 6.d3 c6 7.dxc6 Qxc6 8.Nf3 Bg4 9.0-0) 5...b5 6.cxb5 Nxd5 7.Nc3 N5b6 8.Bb3 axb5 9.d4 b4 10.Ne4 e6.

4.Be2 The game could also continue 4.Bxd7+ Qxd7 5.c4 c6 6.dxc6 Nxc6 7.Nf3 e5 or 4.Bc4 Bg4 5.f3 Bf5 6.Nc3 Nbd7 with the idea of playing 7...Nb6 to win back the d5 pawn.

4...Nxd5 5.d4 Bf5 6.Nf3 e6 7.0-0 Be7 8.a3 0-0 9.c4 Nb6 10.Nc3 Bf6



Both players are safely castled kingside.

White has a space advantage in the center and needs to develop the queenside bishop and rook.

Black's plans include developing the queenside knight and rook.

3.c4

3...c6 An alternative is 3...e6 4.dxe6 (or 4.d4 exd5 5.Nc3) 4...Bxe6 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Be2 Bc5 7.0-0 Qd7 giving Black active piece play with pressure on the d-file for the pawn.

4.d4 An alternative for White is 4.dxc6 Nxc6 5.Nf3 e5 6.d3.

4...cxd5 transposes into the Panno-Botvinnik Attack of the Caro-Kann Defense.

5.Nc3 g6 6.Qb3 6.Bg5, 6.Nf3, and 6.cxd5 are also playable for White.

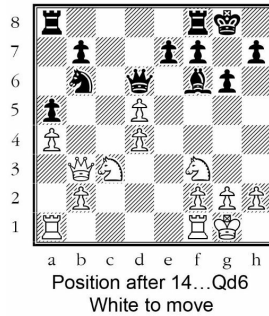
6...Bg7 7.cxd5 0-0 8.Be2 White can also play 8.Nge2 or 8.g3.

8...Nbd7 Black can also consider playing 8...Na6, 8...a5, or 8...b6.

9.Bf3 Nb6 10.Bg5 White can also play 10.Nge2 or 10.Bf4.

10...Bg4 11.Bxf6 Bxf3 12.Nxf3 Bxf6 13.a4 threatening 14.a5 to chase Black's knight away from attacking the pawn on d5.

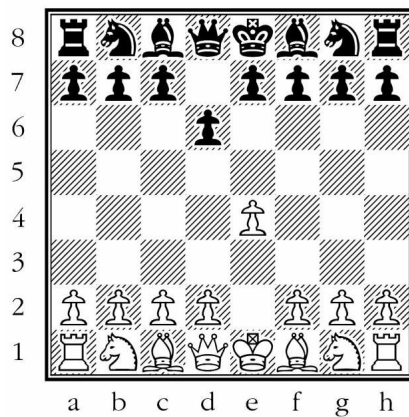
13...a5 14.0-0 Qd6 threatening to move a rook to d8 to put pressure on the d5 pawn.



Both players are safely castled kingside.

White has an extra doubled isolated d-pawn and might continue with 15.Ne4 followed by 16.d6.

Pirc Defense



The Pirc Defense, **1.e4 e6**, is a hypermodern opening named for 20th century Yugoslavian Grandmaster Vasja Pirc.

Black allows White to occupy the center with pawns with the goal to undermine them.

White plans to support the center pawns with the pieces with the hope to safely advance the pawns in the future.

Black usually fianchettoes the kingside bishop and attacks the dark squares in the center with ...e5 or ...c5.

After 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6, White's two main choices are 4.f4, the Austrian Attack, and 4.Nf3, the Classical System.

Pirc Defense

1.e4

d6

2.d4

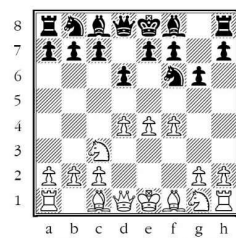
Nf6

3.Nc3

g6

4.f4

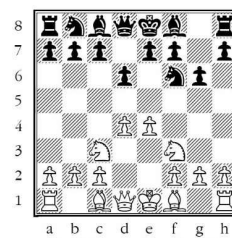
Austrian Attack



Position after 4.f4
Black to move

4.Nf3

Classical System



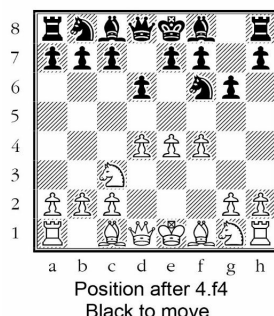
Position after 4.Nf3
Black to move

Austrian Attack

The Austrian Attack, **1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.f4**, is White's most aggressive variation of the Pirc.

White has a strong grip on the center, and after developing the minor pieces, plans to advance the pawn to e5.

Black can avoid the main lines of the Pirc after 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 by playing 3...e5, 3...c6, or 3...Nbd7.



4...Bg7 5.Nf3 0-0 An alternative for Black is 5...c5 6.Bb5+ Bd7 7.e5 Ng4 8.e6 fxe6.

6.Bd3 An aggressive variation for White is 6.e5 Nfd7 7.h4 c5 8.h5 cxd4 9.hxg6 dxc3 10.gxf7+ Rxf7 11.Bc4.

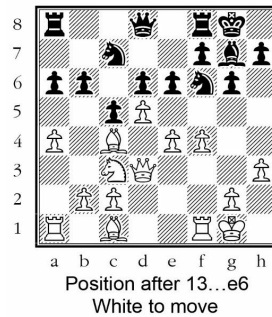
6...Na6 Black can also play 6...Nc6 7.e5 dxe5 8.fxe5 Nh5 9.Be3 Bg4 10.Be2 f6.

7.0-0 c5 8.d5 Bg4 9.Bc4 9.h3 Bxf3 10.Qxf3 is an alternative for White.

9...Nc7 moving the knight off the edge of the board to attack more important squares.

10.h3 Bxf3 11.Qxf3 a6 planning to expand on the queenside with ...b5.

12.a4 b6 13.Qd3 e6 challenging White's pawn center.



White has more space in the center and the bishop pair but needs to develop the queenside bishop.

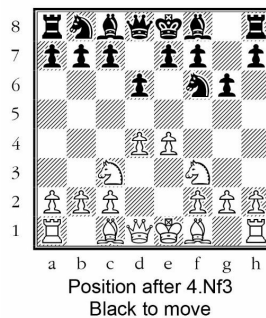
Black has a strong fianchettoed bishop on the a1-h8 diagonal not blocked by friendly pawns.

Black can exchange a set of center pawns and prepare to advance the pawn to b5.

Classical System

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Nf3, the Classical System, is a quieter, more positional variation for White.

Other fourth move choices for White are 4.Be3, 4.Bg5, 4.f3, 4.g3, 4.h3, 4.Be2, and 4.Bc4.



4...Bg7 5.Be2 White can also choose between 5.h3, 5.Bc4, 5.Be3, 5.Bf4, and 5.Bg5.

5...0-0 6.0-0 Bg4 Alternatives for Black are 6...c6 7.a4 a5, 6...Nc6 7.Be3 Bg4, 6...c5 7.d5 Na6, 6...a6 7.a4 b6, and 6...Nbd7 7.e5 Ne8.

7.Be3 Another idea for White is 7.h3 Bxf3 8.Bxf3 Nc6 9.Ne2 e5 10.c3 Re8 11.d5.

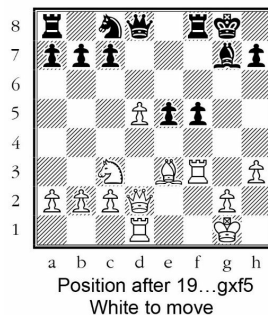
7...Nc6 8.Qd2 8.d5 Bxf3 9.Bxf3 Ne5 10.Be2 is an alternative for White.

8...e5 9.d5 Ne7 10.Rad1 White can also play 10.Ne1 Bxe2 11.Qxe2 c6 12.dxc6 bxc6 13.Rd1.

10...Bd7 11.Ne1 Ng4 An alternative for Black is 11...b5 12.a3 a5 13.Nd3 Qb8 14.f3 c6.

12.Bxg4 Bxg4 13.f3 Bd7 14.f4 Bg4 15.Nf3 f5 16.fxe5 dxe5 17.h3 Bxf3 18.Rxf3 Nc8 planning to move the knight to d6.

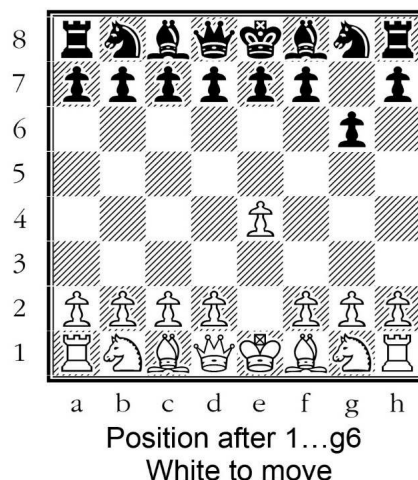
19.exf5 gxf5



Black's e- and f-pawns control key squares in the center and kingside.

White can play 20.Bh6 and trade off the dark-squared bishops, exposing Black's king.

Modern Defense



The Modern Defense, **1.e4 g6**, is also called the Robatsch Defense named for 20th century Austrian Grandmaster Karl Robatsch.

The opening usually continues 2.d4 Bg7.

Black allows White to occupy the center with pawns on e4 and d4 with the idea of undermining them in hypermodern fashion.

The Modern Defense is closely related to the Pirc Defense with many transpositions between the two. The main difference between them is Black delays or omits developing the knight to f6 in the Modern, usually using the tempo to develop a piece on the queenside.

In the Modern Defense, Black has a flexible position with a variety of ways to deploy the queenside minor pieces and pawns.

3.c4 can transpose into the King's Indian Defense.

After 3.Nc3, Black's most popular responses are 3...d6 and 3...c6.

Modern Defense

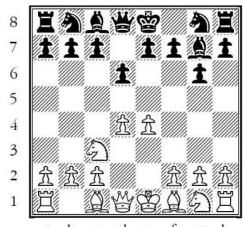
1.e4 g6

2.d4 Bg7

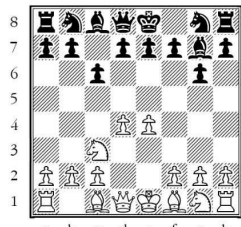
3.Nc3

3...d6

3...c6



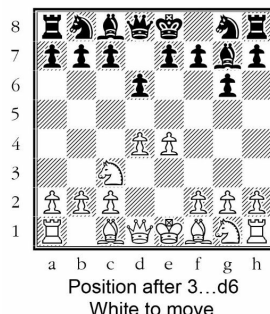
Position after 3...d6
White to move



Position after 3...c6
White to move

3...d6

After **1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3**, **3...d6** is a natural move and Black's most common response.



4.f4 is White's most aggressive move. Another variation for White is **4.Be3 a6 5.Qd2 Nd7 6.h4 h5 7.Nh3 b5 8.Ng5**. Other possible moves for White are **4.Nf3**, **4.g3**, and **4.Bg5**.

4...a6 Black can also play **4...Nf6 5.Nf3 0-0 6.Bd3 Na6 7.0-0 c5 8.d5 Bg4**. Other possible moves for Black are **4...c6**, **4...Nc6**, **4...e6**, and **4...Nd7**.

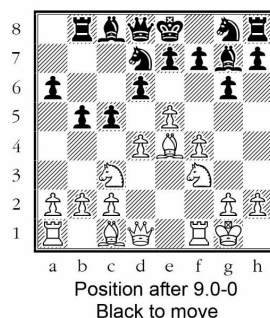
5.Nf3 b5 Black can also play **5...Nd7 6.Bd3 c5** attacking the d4 pawn from the flank.

6.Bd3 Nd7 6...Bb7 7.0-0 Nd7 8.e5 e6 is an alternative for Black.

7.e5 An alternative for White is **7.a4 b4 8.Ne2 c5 9.c3**.

7...c5 8.Be4 White can also play **8.Ng5** or **8.Be3**.

8...Rb8 9.0-0



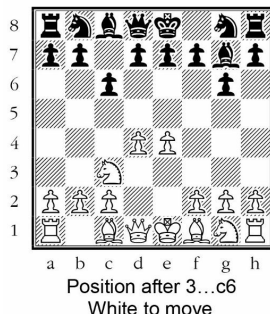
White has more space in the center and kingside, a lead in development, and a castled king.

Black is attacking on the queenside and can expand further with 9...b4 or try to undermine White's pawn center with 9...cxd4.

3...c6

After 1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3, 3...c6 is an option for Black that may transpose into the Caro-Kann Defense.

Besides 3...d6 and 3...c6, Black can also consider playing 3...c5, 3...b6, 3...e6, 3...e5, 3...Nc6, or 3...a6.



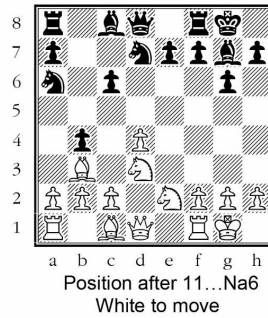
4.Bc4 4.Nf3 d6 (4...d5 5.h3 dxe4 6.Nxe4 transposes into the Caro-Kann) 5.Be3 Nf6 6.Qd2 is also playable. 4.f4, 4.Be3, and 4.h3 are other alternatives for White.

4...b5 expanding on the queenside. Black can also advance the d-pawn with either 4...d6 or 4...d5.

5.Bb3 b4 forcing the knight to retreat.

6.Nce2 d6 7.Nf3 Nf6 8.e5 dxe5 9.Nxe5 0-0 10.0-0 Nfd7 double attacking the e5 knight.

11.Nd3 Na6



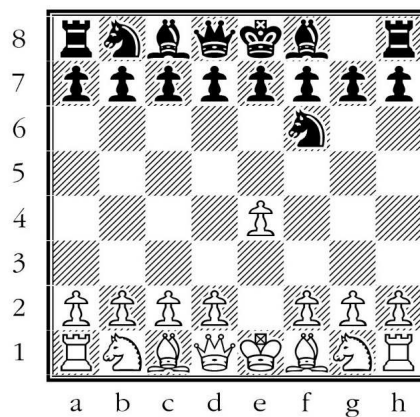
Both players are safely castled kingside.

Black needs to develop the queenside bishop and rook.

White has an extra pawn in the center, but not the big pawn center that frequently occurs in other variations.

12.a3 is an idea for White to develop the rook on the a-file.
After 12...bxa3 13.Rxa3, White's rook is activated and Black has isolated pawns on the a- and c- files.

Alekhine's Defense



Alekhine's Defense, **1.e4 Nf6**, is named after the 4th World Champion Alexander Alekhine who popularized the opening by using it as a surprise weapon in Budapest in 1921.

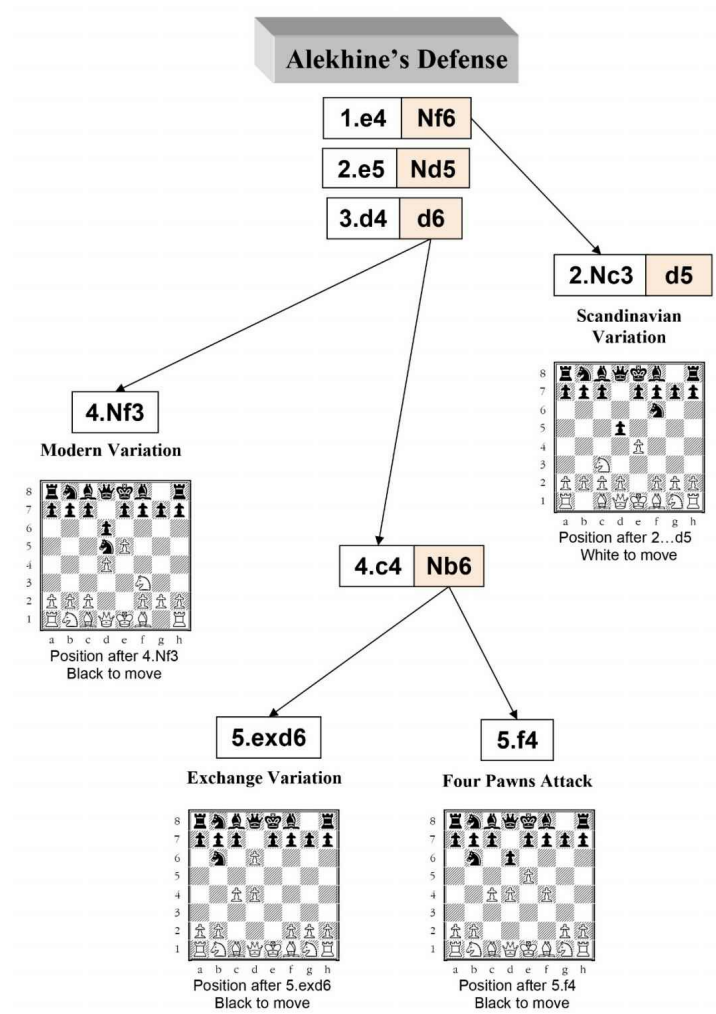
Black allows White to chase the knight across the board Nf6-d5-b6 and control the center with pawns, with the goal of undermining the pawns in the spirit of hypermodern theory.

While White's pieces normally develop freely, Black must be careful not to get a cramped position with limited space.

After 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6, the Modern Variation, 4.Nf3, and the Exchange Variation, 4.c4 Nb6 5.exd6, give White a modest space advantage in the center.

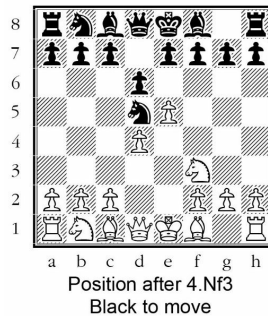
The Four Pawns Attack, 4.c4 Nb6 5.f4, is White's most ambitious variation, creating an imposing pawn center that Black strives to undermine.

White may choose to avoid normal Alekhine's Defense positions by playing the Scandinavian Variation, 1.e4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5.



Modern Variation

The Modern Variation, **1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3**, is sometimes referred to as the Main Line of Alekhine's Defense.



The idea behind 4.Nf3 is to develop the knight while also protecting the advanced e5 pawn.

The disadvantage of 4.Nf3 is that Black can pin the knight to the queen with 4...Bg4.

4...Bg4 developing the bishop before it gets blocked by ...e6. 4...c6 is solid but passive and 4...g6 prepares to fianchetto the bishop to attack White's center pawns. Another option for Black is 4...dxe5 5.Nxe5 c6 6.Be2 Bf5 7.0-0 Nd7.

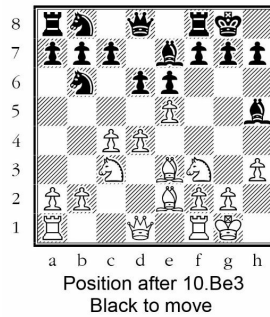
5.Be2 After 5.h3 Bxf3 6.Qxf3 dxe5 7.dxe5, White has more space in the center and the bishop pair. Black has room to develop the pieces.

5...e6 5...c6 and 5...Nc6 are other options for Black.

6.0-0 White can also play 6.h3 or 6.c4.

6...Be7 7.c4 Nb6 8.h3 Other options for White are 8.Nc3, 8.exd6, and 8.Be3.

8...Bh5 9.Nc3 0-0 10.Be3



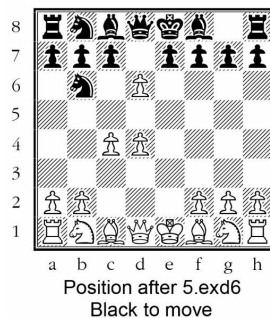
Both players are safely castled kingside.

Black's b8 knight often develops to c6 in this and other variations of Alekhine's Defense.

White has more space in the center with well-developed pieces and attacking ideas like exd6 followed by d5.

Exchange Variation

The Exchange Variation of Alekhine's Defense is **1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.exd6**.



By playing the Exchange Variation, White trades off the e5 pawn and can develop the minor pieces naturally with a central space advantage.

5...cxd6 A middlegame with a symmetrical pawn structure results after 5...exd6 6.Nc3 Be7 7.Bd3 Nc6 8.Nge2 Bg4 9.f3 Bh5 10.0-0 Bg6.

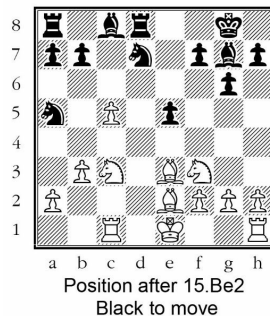
6.Nc3 g6 7.Be3 White can also play 7.Nf3, 7.Bd3, or 7.h3.

7...Bg7 8.Rc1 0-0 An alternative for Black is 8...Nc6.

9.b3 e5 Black can also play 9...Nc6 10.d5 Ne5 11.Be2 f5 or 9...Bf5 10.Nf3 Bg4.

10.dxe5 10.d5 f5 gives Black a space advantage on the kingside.

10...dxe5 11.Qxd8 Rxd8 12.c5 N6d7 13.Bc4 Nc6 14.Nf3 Na5 15.Be2 preserving the bishop pair.



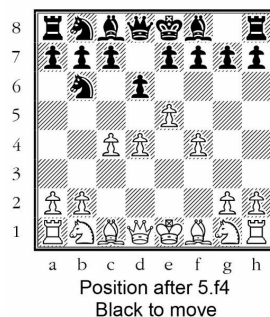
The pawn structure is asymmetrical.

White would like to advance the pawn majority on the queenside.

Black controls more squares in the center and needs to develop the light-squared bishop and queenside rook.

Four Pawns Attack

The Four Pawns Attack of Alekhine's Defense is **1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.f4**.



White aggressively dominates the center with pawns with the goal of securing the center before Black can undermine the pawns.

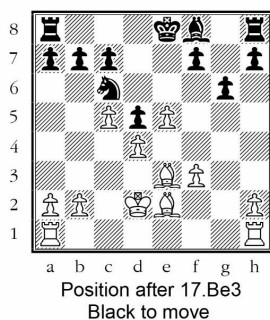
5...dxe5 Black can also play **5...Bf5** **6.Nc3** **e6** or **5...g6** **6.Nc3** **Bg7**.

6.fxe5 **Nc6** Alternatives for Black are **6...c5** and **6...Bf5**.

7.Be3 **Bf5** developing the bishop before playing ...e6.

8.Nc3 **e6** **9.Nf3** **Bg4** Other possible lines for Black are **9...Be7** **10.d5** **exd5** **11.exd5** **Nb4** and **9...Qd7** **10.Be2** **0-0-0**.

10.Be2 **Bxf3** **11.gxf3** **Qh4+** **12.Bf2** **Qf4** **13.c5** **Nd5**
14.Nxd5 **exd5** **15.Qd2** **Qxd2+** **16.Kxd2** **g6** **17.Be3**



White has the bishop pair, but the center is blocked, which helps Black's knight.

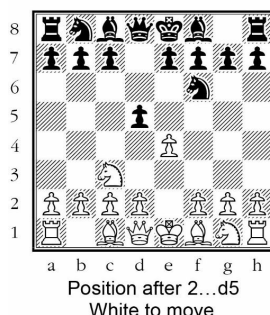
Since the queens are traded and the endgame is approaching, Black might decide not to castle and keep the king in the center.

Scandinavian Variation

White can avoid the main variations of Alekhine's Defense by playing the Scandinavian Variation, **1.e4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5.**

The Scandinavian Variation name comes from the Scandinavian Defense, 1.e4 d5.

Black can also play 2...e5 and transpose into the Vienna Game.

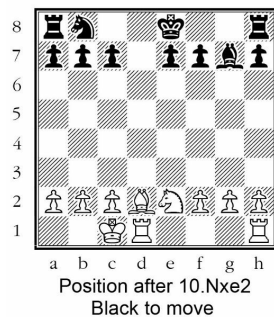


3.e5 An alternative is 3.exd5 Nxd5, exchanging the center pawns.

3...d4 3...Nfd7 4.d4 c5 5.f4 e6 6.Nf3 results in a French Defense type of position where White would like to expand on the kingside while Black would like the action to take place on the queenside.

4.exf6 dxc3 5.fxg7 cxd2+ 6.Qxd2 Another variation is 6.Bxd2 Bxg7 7.c3 Be6 8.Nf3 Nc6 9.Bb5 Qd5 10.Qa4 a6 11.Bxc6+ Qxc6 12.Qxc6+ bxc6, giving Black the bishop pair with an open center, but four isolated pawns.

6...Qxd2+ 7.Bxd2 Bxg7 8.0-0-0 Bg4 9.Be2 Bxe2 10.Nxe2

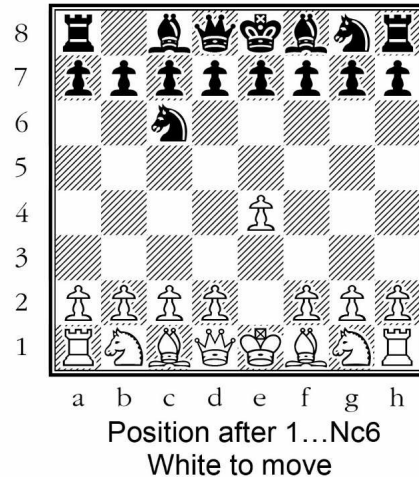


The endgame is quickly approaching.

White has a small lead in development and a slightly better pawn structure.

Black can choose to play 10...0-0, 10...Nd7 followed by 11...0-0-0, or to move the rook to the half-open g-file with 10...Rg8 and keep the king in the center.

Nimzowitsch Defense



The Nimzowitsch Defense, **1.e4 Nc6**, is named after the late 19th and early 20th century Danish chess master and writer Aron Nimzowitsch.

Nimzowitsch is considered the founder and leading practitioner of hypermodern theory.

Black invites White to occupy the center with pawns with the goal of restraining and then undermining them.

White's two main responses are 2.Nf3 developing a piece or 2.d4 taking the center.

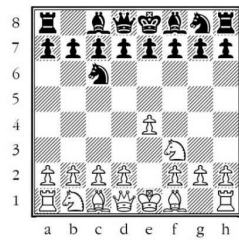
Nimzowitsch Defense

1.e4

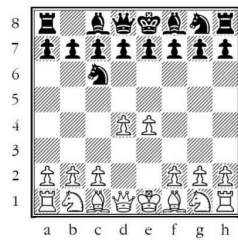
Nc6

2.Nf3

2.d4



Position after 2.Nf3
Black to move



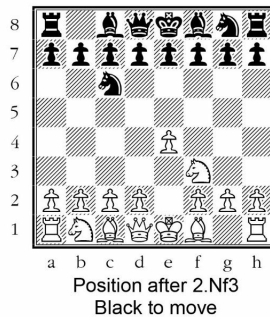
Position after 2.d4
Black to move

2.Nf3

After **1.e4 Nc6**, White develops the knight toward the center with **2.Nf3**.

Developing the queenside knight with **2.Nc3** is also playable for White.

Black can then play **2...e5 3.Nf3 Nf6** transposing into the Four Knights Game or **2...Nf6 3.d4 d5 4.e5 Nd7**.

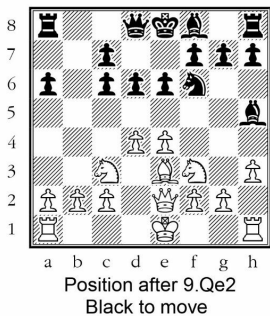


2...d6 Black can also play **2...e5** and transpose into a double king pawn opening or play the sharper **2...f5 3.exf5 d5 4.Bb5 Bxf5 5.Ne5 Qd6 6.d4 Nf6 7.0-0 Nd7 8.Bxc6 bxc6**.

3.d4 Nf6 4.Nc3 White can also play **4.c3 g6 5.Bd3 Bg7 6.0-0**.

4...Bg4 5.Be3 White can grab space on the queenside by playing **5.d5 Nb8 6.Be2 g6 7.0-0 Bg7 8.a4**.

5...e6 6.h3 Bh5 7.Bb5 a6 8.Bxc6+ bxc6 9.Qe2



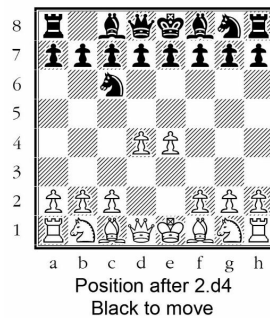
White has more space in the center and the option of castling on either side.

Black has a weaker queenside pawn structure and plans on castling kingside.

Black has the bishop pair which may become powerful later if the center opens.

2.d4

After **1.e4 Nc6**, White takes control of the center by playing the natural **2.d4**.



2...e5 An alternative for Black is **2...d5 3.e5** (3.Nc3 and 3.exd5 are also playable) **3...Bf5 4.Nf3 e6**.

3.d5 White can transpose to the Scotch Game with **3.Nf3** or play **3.dxe5 Nxe5 4.Nf3** (or the ambitious **4.f4**) **4...Nxf3+ 5.Qxf3 Qf6 6.Qg3 Bb4+ 7.c3 Bd6 8.f4**.

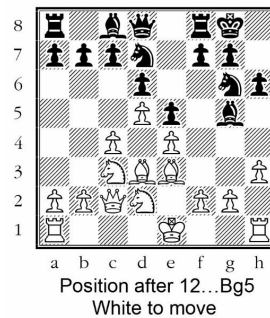
3...Nce7 4.Bd3 An attacking idea for White is **4.Nf3 Ng6 5.h4**.

4...Ng6 5.Be3 Nf6 6.h3 Bb4+ 7.c3 White can also play **7.Nd2**.

7...Be7 8.Nd2 0-0 9.Ne2 d6 10.c4 advancing in the direction of the pawn arrow and clearing c3 for the knight.

10...h6 11.Qc2 Nd7 12.Nc3 Bg5 planning to trade the

restricted dark-squared bishop.



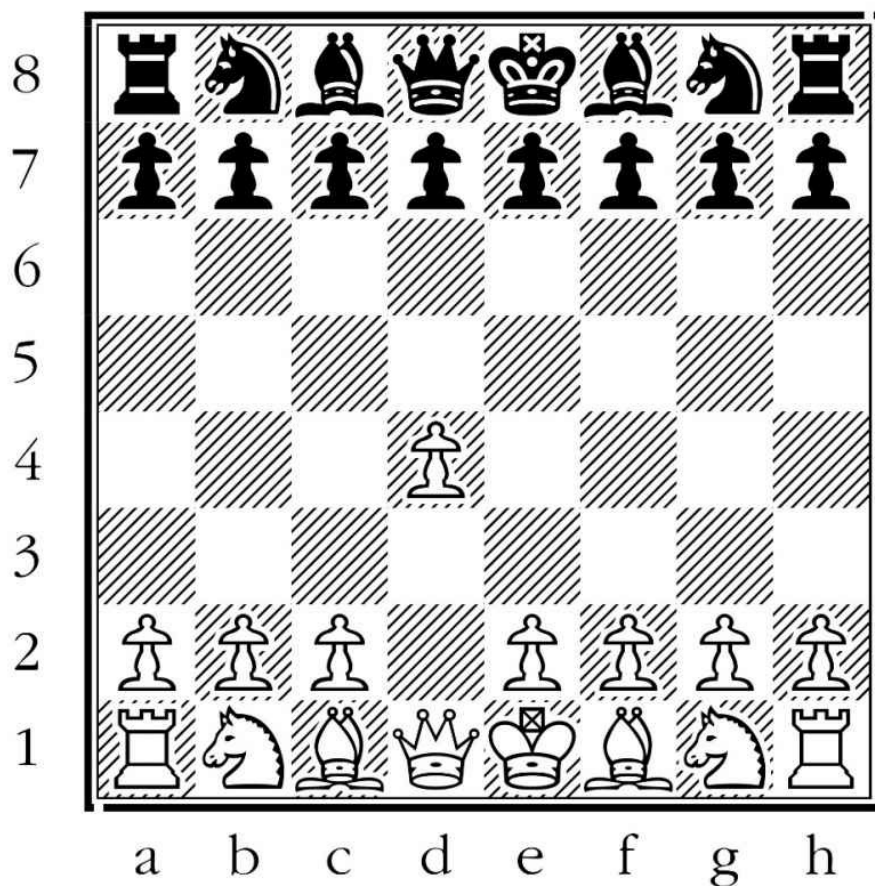
White's pawn arrow points to the queenside, while Black's pawn arrow points to the kingside.

Black would like to play ...f5 and needs to develop the queenside bishop and rook.

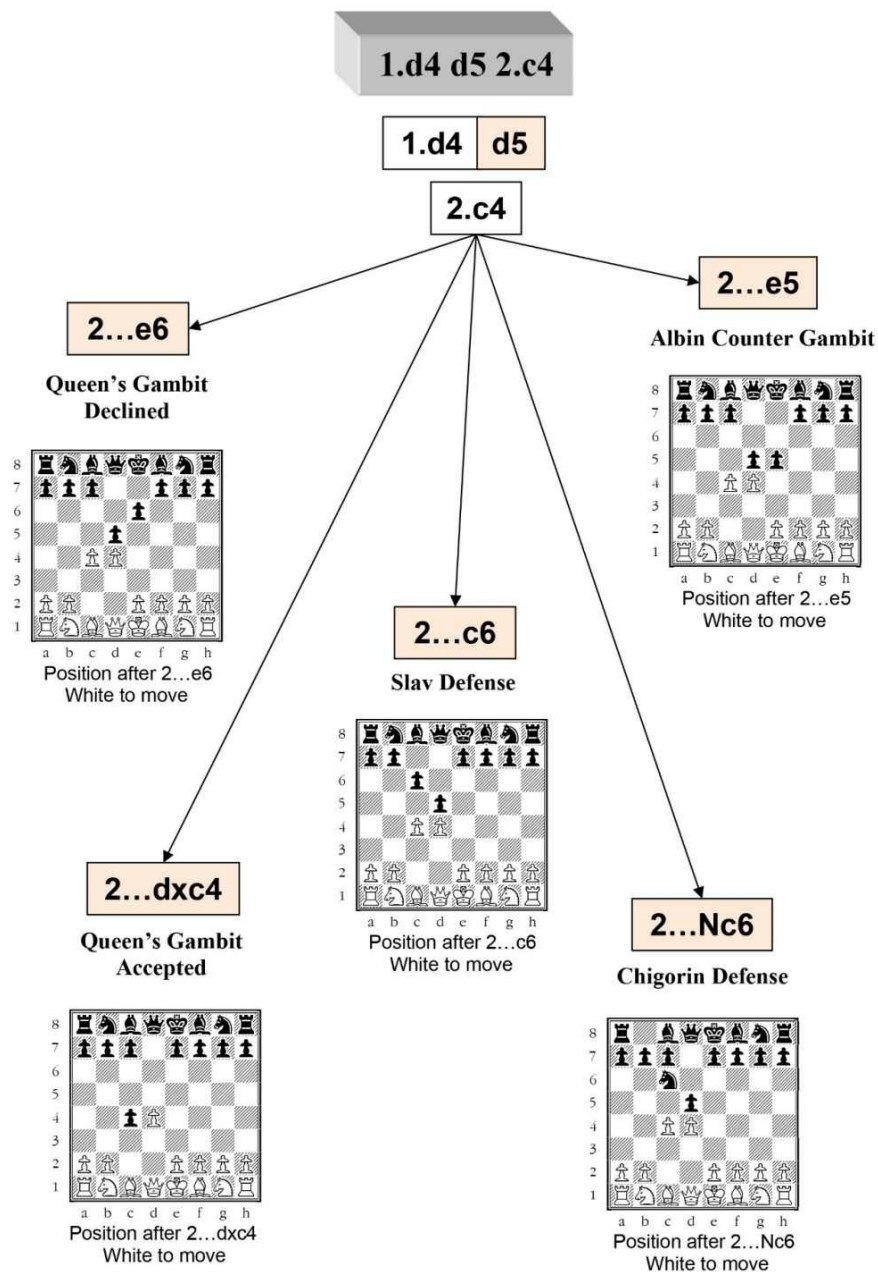
White has pressure on f5, preventing Black from pushing the pawn there in the near term.

White has the option of castling on either side.

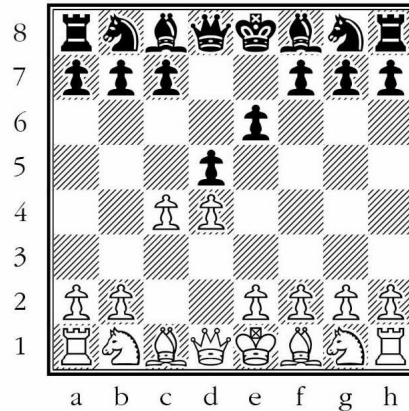
Queen's Pawn Openings



Position after 1.d4
Black to move



Queen's Gambit Declined



Position after 2...e6
White to move

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 is the Queen's Gambit Declined.

2...e6 gives Black a foothold in the center and opens the a3-f8 diagonal for the dark-squared bishop but blocks the light-squared bishop on the h3-c8 diagonal.

If Black eventually plays ...dxc4, it is usually after White develops the f1 bishop to d3, so the bishop moves twice in order to recapture on c4, losing a tempo.

White's pieces have more scope than Black's, with both bishops and the queenside knight being more active than Black's counterparts.

One of Black's primary goals is to free the light-squared bishop.

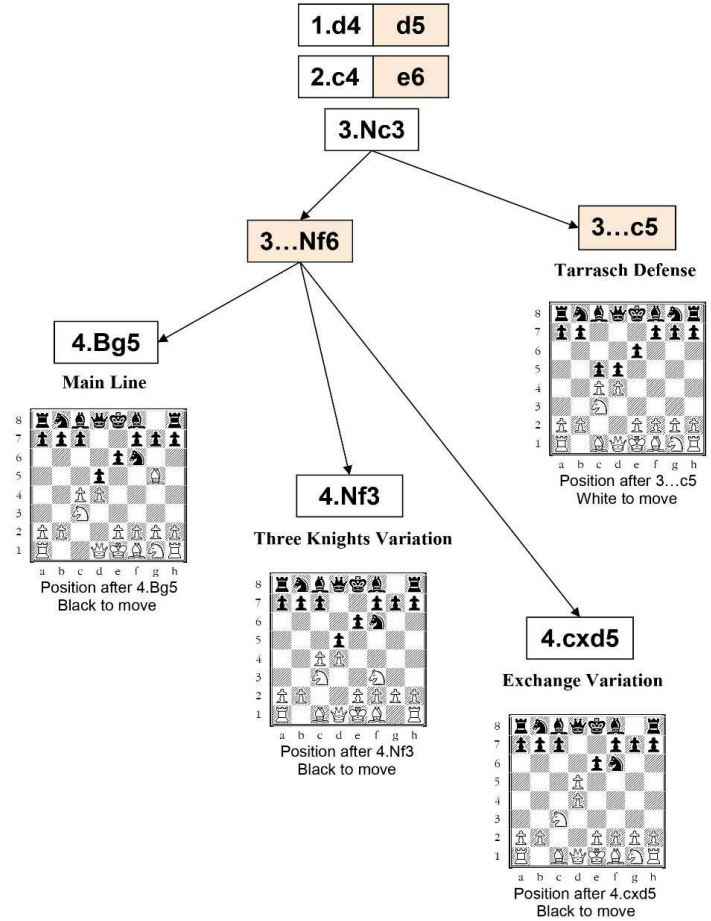
White's most common third move is 3.Nc3. 3.Nf3 usually transposes into variations with 3.Nc3 since both moves are generally played early in the opening.

Black usually responds 3...Nf6, after which White can choose between 4.Bg5 (Main Line), 4.Nf3 (Three Knights Variation), and 4.cxd5 (Exchange Variation).

Black also has the option of aggressively making a bid for space in the center by playing 3...c5, the Tarrasch

Defense.

Queen's Gambit Declined

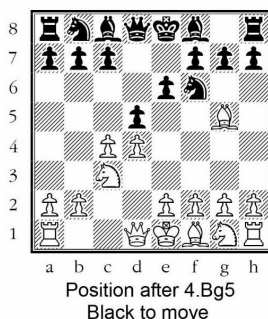


Main Line

After **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6**, **4.Bg5** is the Main Line of the Queen's Gambit Declined.

Black sometimes plays **3...Be7** to delay White's bishop moving to g5.

3...c6 can transpose into the Semi-Slav Defense.



4...Be7 Black can also play the Cambridge Springs Variation, **4...Nbd7 5.e3 c6 6.Nf3 Qa5** with the idea of ... Bb4.

5.e3 5.Nf3 and **5.cxd5** are alternatives for White.

5...0-0 Black can also play **5...h6**, **5...Nbd7**, or **5...c6**.

6.Nf3 h6 A sample line of the Orthodox Variation is **6... Nbd7 7.Rc1 c6 8.Bd3 dxc4 (8...h6 9.Bf4) 9.Bxc4 Nd5 10.Bxe7 Qxe7 11.0-0 Nxc3 12.Rxc3 e5 13.dxe5 Nxe5 14.Nxe5 Qxe5 15.Qb3 Qe7 16.Rd1 Bf5** finally developing the light-squared bishop.

7.Bh4 7.Bxf6 Bxf6 8.Rc1 c6 9.Bd3 Nd7 10.0-0 dxc4 11.Bxc4 e5 12.h3 exd4 13.exd4 Nb6 14.Bb3 Bf5 is a line from the Petrosian Variation.

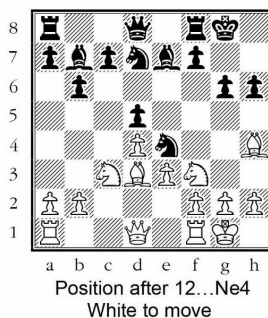
7...b6 is called the Tartakower Variation. A sample line of Lasker's Variation is **7...Ne4 8.Bxe7 Qxe7 9.Rc1 c6 10.Bd3 Nxc3 11.Rxc3 Nd7 12.0-0 dxc4 13.Bxc4 b6 14.Qe2 a5**.

8.Bd3 White can also play 8.Be2, 8.Qc2, 8.Qb3, 8.Rc1, or 8.cxd5.

8...Bb7 An alternative is 8...dxc4 9.Bxc4 Bb7 10.0-0 Nbd7 (or 10...Ne4).

9.0-0 Nbd7 10.cxd5 The game could also continue 10.Qe2 Ne4 11.Bg3 c5.

10...exd5 11.Bf5 g6 12.Bd3 Ne4



Both players castled kingside and all the minor pieces are developed.

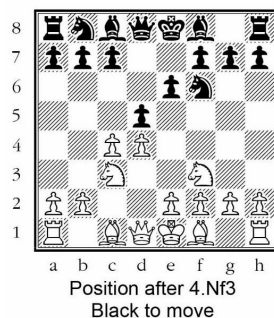
Although the d5 pawn blocks the h1-a8 diagonal for Black's fianchettoed light-squared bishop, the bishop protects the pawn and helps support the knight on e4.

After trading bishops on e7, White can play Rc1 to put pressure on the c7 pawn.

Three Knights Variation

The Three Knights Variation of the Queen's Gambit Declined is **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3**.

By playing 4.Nf3, White begins preparation to castle kingside and delays choosing a square for the dark-squared bishop.



4...Be7 4...c6 transposes into the Semi-Slav Defense.

4...c5 is the Semi-Tarrasch Variation. The game could continue 5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.e4 Nxc3 7.bxc3 cxd4 8.cxd4 Bb4+ 9.Bd2 Bxd2+ 10.Qxd2 0-0 11.Bc4 Nc6 12.0-0 b6 13.Rad1.

4...Bb4 is the Ragozin Variation. A sample continuation is 5.cxd5 exd5 6.Bg5 Nbd7 7.e3 c5 8.Bd3 c4 9.Bf5 Qa5 10.Qc2 0-0 11.0-0 Re8.

5.Bf4 is called the Harwitz Attack.

5...0-0 6.e3 c5 Black's other choices are 6...Nbd7, 6...b6, and 6...c6.

7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.Qc2 Alternative lines for White are 8.cxd5 Nxd5 9.Nxd5 exd5 10.a3 Nc6 11.Bd3 and 8.a3 Nc6 9.Be2 (or 9.Rc1).

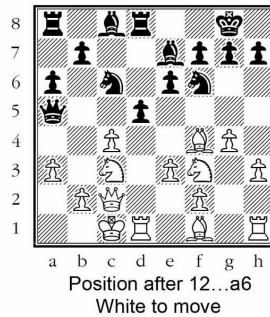
8...Nc6 9.a3 Qa5 Black can also play 9...Qe7 10.Rd1 Rd8.

10.0-0 White can also play 10.Nd2 or 10.Rd1 with the idea of castling kingside.

10...Be7 Black's other main options are 10...dxc4, 10...a6, 10...Bd7, and 10...Ne4.

11.g4 attacking on the kingside.

11...Rd8 12.h3 a6 with the idea of 13...dxc4 followed by 14...b5.



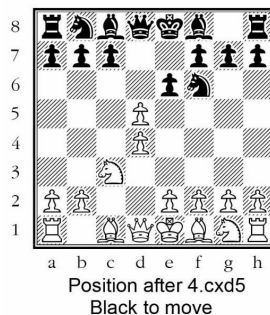
Opposite side castling is the predominant theme where White would like the action to take place on the kingside while Black attacks on the queenside.

A battle will also likely take place in the center.

Exchange Variation

After **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6, 4.cxd5** is the Exchange Variation of the Queen's Gambit Declined.

4...exd5 An alternative line for Black is 4...Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 c5 attacking White's pawn center.



5.Bg5 developing the bishop and pinning the knight to the queen before blocking the c1-h6 diagonal with e3. Other

alternatives are the developing moves 5.Nf3 and 5.Bf4.

5...c6 Also playable for Black is 5...Be7 or 5...Nbd7. A possible continuation is 5...Be7 6.e3 0-0 7.Bd3 Nbd7 8.Nge2 Re8 9.0-0 c6 10.Qc2 Nf8.

6.Qc2 6.e3 is playable with Qc2 and Bd3 soon to follow. White can also play 6.Nf3 Be7 7.e3.

6...Be7 Black can creatively develop the queenside knight with 6...Na6 7.a3 Nc7.

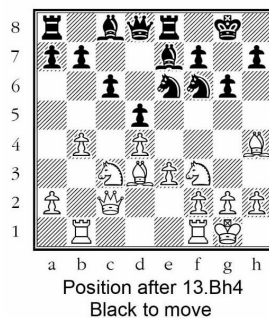
7.e3 Nbd7 8.Bd3 0-0 Black can also play 8...Nf8 9.Nge2 Ne6.

9.Nf3 White can also develop the knight to e2 with 9.Nge2 Re8 10.0-0 Nf8 11.f3.

9...Re8 10.0-0 White can castle queenside leading to an opposite side castling game with 10.0-0-0 Nf8 11.h3 Be6 12.Kb1 Rc8 13.g4.

10...Nf8 11.Rab1 g6 Black can also play 11...a5 to prevent 12.b4.

12.b4 Ne6 13.Bh4



Both players are safely castled kingside.

White plans a minority attack on the queenside by advancing the a- and b-pawns.

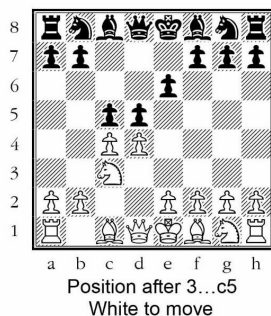
Black would like to attack on the half-open e-file and the kingside.

Tarrasch Defense

The Tarrasch Defense of the Queen's Gambit Declined is **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5**, named for the late 19th century German World Champion contender Siegbert Tarrasch.

By playing 3...c5 Black accepts the liability of an isolated d-pawn in order to obtain quick development and active piece play.

Black's bishops will eventually develop to active squares without being blocked by friendly pawns.



4.cxd5 An alternative variation is **4.e3 Nf6 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.a3 a6 7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.b4 Ba7**.

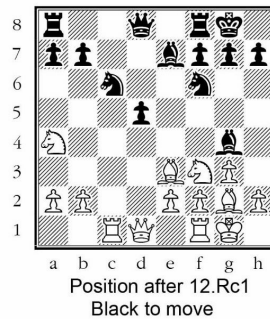
4...exd5 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.g3 White can also play **6.dxc5**, **6.Bf4**, **6.Bg5**, or **6.e3**.

6...Nf6 6...c4 7.Bg2 Bb4 8.0-0 Nge7 is an alternative line for Black.

7.Bg2 Be7 8.0-0 0-0 9.dxc5 Other variations White can choose are **9.b3 Ne4 10.Bb2 Bf6 11.Na4**, **9.Bg5 cxd4 10.Nxd4 h6 11.Be3**, **9.Bf4 Be6 10.dxc5 Bxc5 11.Rc1**, or **9.Be3 c4 10.Ne5**.

9...Bxc5 Black can also play **9...d4 10.Na4 Bf5**.

10.Na4 White can also play 10.Bg5 or 10.a3.
10...Be7 11.Be3 Bg4 12.Rc1

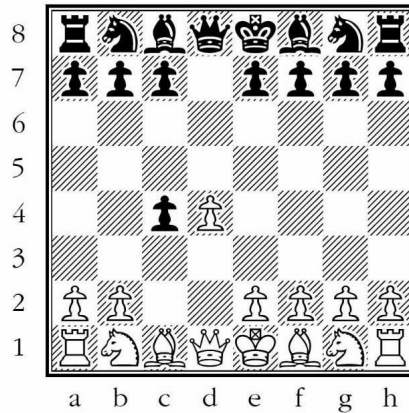


Both players are safely castled kingside.

Black plans to move the rooks to c8 and e8.

White can complete development with Qd2 and Rfd1 to put pressure on the isolated d-pawn.

Queen's Gambit Accepted



Position after 2...dxc4
White to move

In the Queen's Gambit Accepted, **1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4**, Black captures the unprotected c4 pawn, allowing White the opportunity to control the center with pawns.

White often regains the sacrificed pawn, which is usually unprofitable for Black to attempt to retain.

Black plans to hold back White's pawn center and weaken the pawns with the idea of ...c5 and ...cxd4 (or ...e5 and ...exd4). If White protects the d4 pawn with e3, recapturing with the e3 pawn after ...cxd4 results in an isolated White pawn on d4.

White's main responses to the Queen's Gambit Accepted are 3.Nf3 and 3.e4.

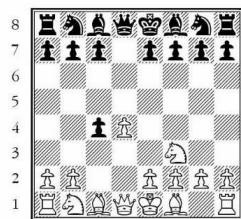
Queen's Gambit Accepted

1.d4 d5

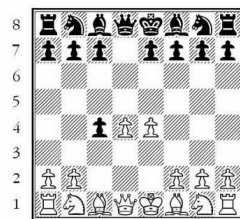
2.c4 dxc4

3.Nf3

3.e4



Position after 3.Nf3
Black to move

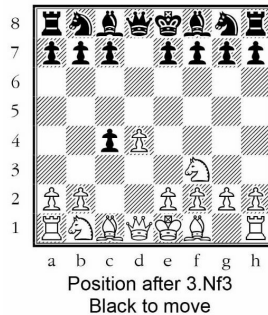


Position after 3.e4
Black to move

3.Nf3

After **1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4**, White's most common response is **3.Nf3**, preventing Black from challenging the center with **3...e5**.

White usually tries to regain the sacrificed pawn by playing **4.e3** and **5.Bxc4**.



3...Nf6 Other ideas for Black are **3...a6 4.e3** (or **4.e4**) **4...b5 5.a4 Bb7**, **3...c5 4.e3 cxd4 5.Bxc4 Qc7**, **3...e6 4.e3 Nf6 5.Bxc4 a6**, and **3...c6 4.e3 Be6 5.a4 Nf6**.

4.e3 Alternatives for White are **4.g3**, **4.Qa4+**, and **4.Nc3 a6 5.e4 b5 6.e5 Nd5 7.a4**.

4...e6 Black can also play **4...Bg4**, **4...a6**, **4...g6**, **4...Be6**, or **4...b5**.

5.Bxc4 c5 6.0-0 6.Qe2 a6 7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.0-0 is another variation White can choose.

6...a6 7.a4 preventing **...b5** but weakening the **b4** square. White's alternatives are **7.dxc5**, **7.Bb3**, **7.Qe2**, and **7.Bd3**.

7...Nc6 8.Qe2 clearing the **d1** square for the rook.

8...cxd4 Black can also play **8...Qc7 9.Nc3 Be7 10.Bd2 0-0**.

9.Rd1 Be7 10.exd4 0-0 11.Nc3



Both players are safely castled kingside.

White has more space and active pieces but an isolated pawn on d4.

Black needs to develop the light-squared bishop and wants to blockade the d5 and b4 squares with the knights.

Possible continuations are 11...Nb4 12.Ne5 Bd7 13.Bg5 Rc8 14.Re1 and 11...Nd5 12.Bd3 Ncb4 13.Bb1 b6 14.Ne5 Bb7 15.Ne4 Rc8.

3.e4

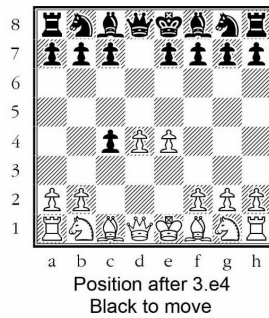
White occupies the center and attacks the c4 pawn immediately with **1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4**.

Alternative variations for White are:

3.Nc3 a6 4.a4 Nf6 5.e4,

3.Qa4+ c6 4.Qxc4, and

3.e3 e5 4.Bxc4 exd4 5.exd4.



Black has a number of ways to attack the d4 and e4 pawns.

3...e5 Other variations Black can play are 3...Nf6 4.e5 Nd5 5.Bxc4 Nb6 6.Bb3 Nc6, 3...Nc6 4.Nf3 Bg4 5.d5 Ne5 6.Bf4 Ng6, 3...c5 4.d5 Nf6, and 3...b5 4.a4 c6.

4.Nf3 exd4 Black can also play 4...Bb4+ 5.Nc3 exd4 6.Nxd4 Ne7.

5.Bxc4 Nc6 5...Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 Nc6 7.0-0 Nf6 is an alternative for Black.

6.0-0 Be6 Another option for Black is 6...Nf6 7.e5 Ne4 8.Re1 Nc5.

7.Bxe6 White can also pin the knight to the king with 7.Bb5.

7...fxe6 8.Qb3 Qd7 9.Qxb7 Rb8 10.Qa6 Nf6 11.Nbd2



Material is even with an unbalanced pawn structure.

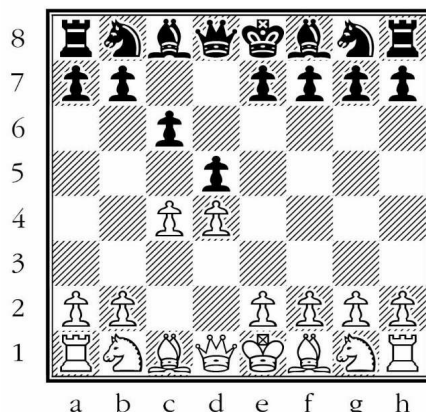
Black needs to develop the bishop and castle kingside as soon

as possible.

White also needs to develop the bishop and then plans to move a rook to the half-open c-file.

The game could continue 11...Bd6 12.b3 0-0 13.Bb2 e5 14.Rfc1 or 11...Bb4 12.Nc4 0-0 13.a3 Bc5.

Slav Defense



Position after 2...c6
White to move

The Slav Defense, **1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6**, is named after several masters of Slavic descent who developed the opening's theory in the early 20th century.

Black defends the d5 pawn with the c-pawn, leaving the h3-c8 diagonal open for the light-squared bishop to develop.

The pawn on c6 also prepares the idea of ...b5, to either support the pawn on c4 after ...dxc4 or attack the White piece that captures on c4, gaining a tempo for queenside expansion.

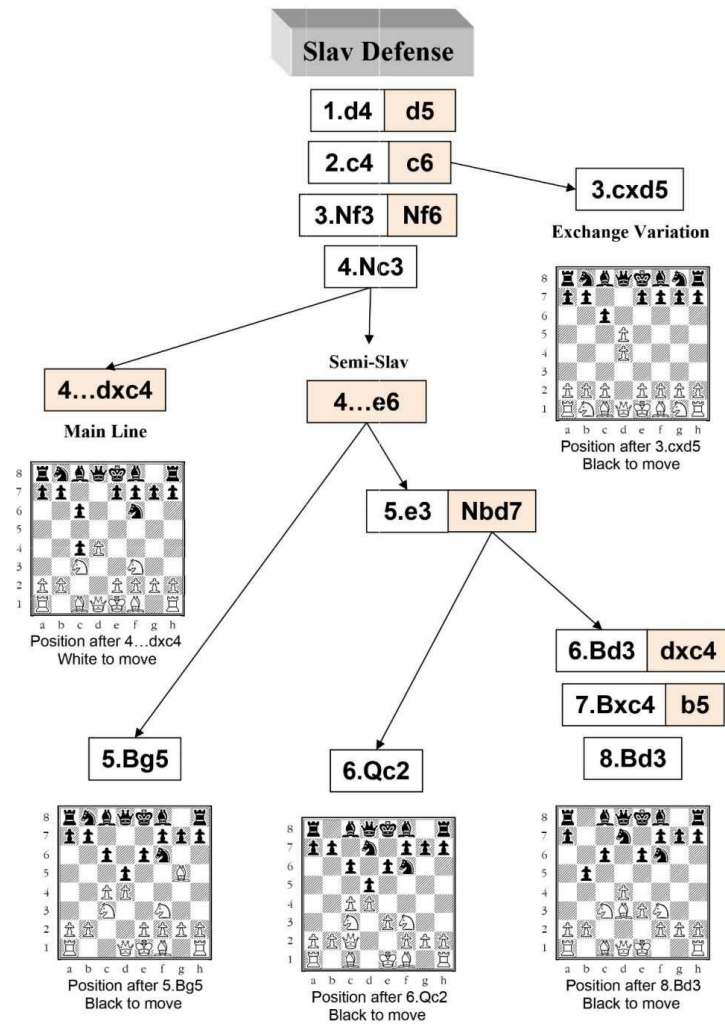
A downside to 2...c6 is it will cost a tempo by moving the pawn twice if Black plans to make the thematic ...c5 break later.

The Main Line of the Slav is 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 dxc4.

The Semi-Slav, where Black plays ...e6 before developing the light-squared bishop, creates a pawn structure that can occur in the Slav Defense or the Queen's Gambit Declined.

White can avoid the main lines of the Slav by playing the Exchange Variation 3.cxd5.

There are many move transpositions between variations of the Slav, Semi-Slav, and Queen's Gambit Declined.

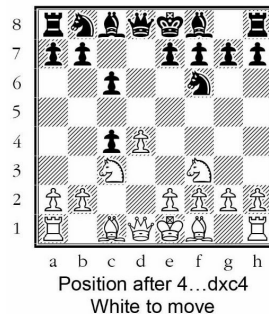


Slav Defense

The Slav Defense starts out **1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3**. 3.Nc3 often transposes to the same positions. The Marshall Gambit of the Slav Defense is 3.Nc3 e6 4.e4 dxe4 5.Nxe4 Bb4+ 6.Bd2 Qxd4 7.Bxb4 Qxe4+ 8.Be2 Na6 9.Bc3. Another line White can choose is 3.Nc3 e6 4.Nf3 dxc4 5.a4 Bb4 6.e3 b5 7.Bd2 a5 8.axb5 Bxc3 9.Bxc3 cxb5 10.b3 Bb7.

3...Nf6 4.Nc3 dxc4 is the Main Line of the Slav Defense.

Black can also play 4...a6 after which White has a number of playable moves: 5.c5, 5.e3, 5.a4, 5.cxd5, 5.g3, 5.h3, 5.Ne5, and 5.Bg5.



5.a4 Bf5 Black can also play 5...e6, 5...Na6, or 5...Bg4.

6.Ne5 Other choices for White are 6.e3 e6 7.Bxc4 Bb4 8.0-0 0-0 9.Qe2 Nbd7 10.e4 Bg6 11.Bd3 and 6.Nh4 e6 7.Nxf5 exf5 8.e3 Bb4 9.Bxc4 0-0 10.0-0 Nbd7 11.Qc2.

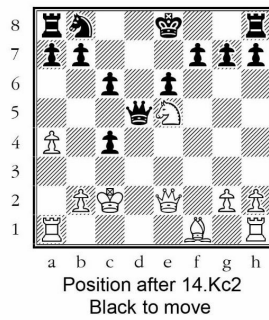
6...e6 Another line for Black is 6...Nbd7 7.Nxc4 Nb6 8.Ne5 a5.

7.f3 White can also play 7.g3 and fianchetto the bishop.

7...Bb4 7...c5 is an alternative for Black.

8.e4 White can also play 8.Nxc4 or 8.Bg5.

8...Bxe4 9.fxe4 Nxe4 10.Bd2 Qxd4 11.Nxe4 Qxe4+ 12.Qe2 Bxd2+ 13.Kxd2 Qd5+ 14.Kc2



Black has four pawns for the bishop, but the c4 pawn is in jeopardy.

White's king is exposed; Black plans to castle kingside.

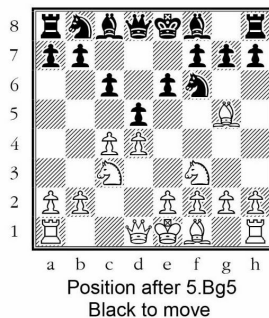
Both players have rooks and a minor piece to develop.

Semi-Slav

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6 is the Semi-Slav.
Black supports the pawn on d5, but blocks the light-squared bishop on the h3-c8 diagonal.

White's main responses are 5.Bg5 and 5.e3.

5.Bg5



5.Bg5 develops the dark-squared bishop to an active square and pins the knight to the queen, but leaves the c4 pawn unprotected and delays developing the light-squared bishop and castling.

5...dxc4 Black can also play 5...h6 6.Bh4 (or 6.Bxf6 Qxf6 7.e3 Nd7 8.Bd3 dxc4 9.Bxc4 g6 10.0-0 Bg7 11.e4 e5) 6...dxc4 7.e4 g5 8.Bg3 b5 9.Be2 Bb7 10.0-0 Nbd7.

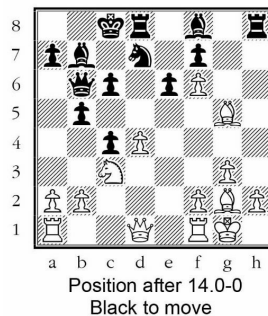
6.e4 An alternative for White is 6.a4 Bb4 7.e4 Bxc3+ 8.bxc3 Qa5 9.e5 Ne4 10.Bd2.

6...b5 7.e5 h6 8.Bh4 g5 9.Nxg5 White can also play 9.Bg3 Nd5 10.Nd2 or 9.exf6 gxh4 10.Ne5 Qxf6 11.a4.

9...hxg5 10.Bxg5 Nbd7 11.g3 An alternative line for White is 11.exf6 Bb7 12.g3 c5 13.d5 Nxf6 14.Bg2 Be7 15.0-0 Nxd5 16.Bxe7 Kxe7 17.Nxb5 Qb6 18.Na3.

11...Bb7 Black can also play 11...Rg8, 11...Qa5, or 11...Qb6.

12.Bg2 Qb6 13.exf6 0-0-0 14.0-0



The players castled on opposite sides.

White is a pawn ahead with a pawn majority on the kingside.

Black has a pawn majority on the queenside.

A complex tactical line is 14...c5 15.d5 b4 16.Rb1 Qa6 17.dxe6 Bxg2 18.e7 Bxf1.

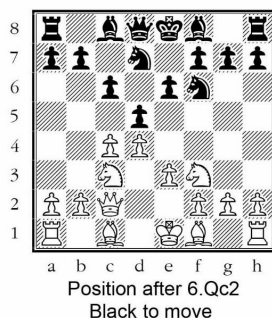
5.e3

5.e3 protects the c4 pawn, but blocks the dark-squared bishop on the c1-h6 diagonal.

5...Nbd7 Black can also play 5...a6 6.b3 Bb4 7.Bd2 Nbd7 8.Bd3 0-0.

White's main choices are 6.Qc2 and 6.Bd3.

6.Qc2



By playing 6.Qc2, White waits for Black to commit to ... dxc4 before playing Bd3.

6...Bd6 Black can also play 6...Be7 or 6...b6 7.Bd3 Bb7 8.0-0 Be7 9.b3 0-0.

7.Bd3 Alternative moves for White are 7.b3, 7.g4, 7.Be2, 7.e4, and 7.Bd2.

7...0-0 8.0-0 dxc4 9.Bxc4 b5 Black can also play 9...a6 10.Rd1 b5 11.Be2 Qc7.

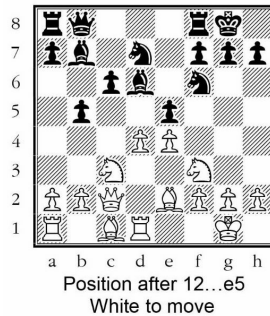
10.Be2 White can also play 10.Bd3 Bb7 11.a3 a6 12.b4 a5 13.Rb1.

10...Bb7 11.Rd1 If White plays 11.e4, Black can respond 11...e5.

11...Qb8 moving off the d-file away from White's rook

and supporting 12...e5. Black can also play 11...Qc7 for the same reasons.

12.e4 e5



The kings are both safely castled on the kingside.

The pawn structure is unbalanced.

Both players are fighting for the center and need to complete development.

6.Bd3

6.Bd3 is called the Meran Variation, named after the town of Meran in northern Italy where it was successfully played in 1924.

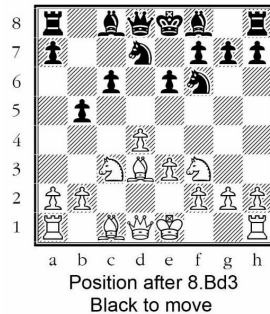
6...dxc4 Black occasionally plays 6...Bd6 7.e4 dxe4 8.Nxe4 Nxe4 9.Bxe4 0-0.

7.Bxc4 b5 8.Bd3

8.Bd3 supports the pawn or knight moving to e4.

White can also play 8.Bb3, keeping the bishop aimed at the e6 and f7 squares, or 8.Be2, allowing the queen to directly protect the d4 pawn.

Black is planning ...c5 to open the h1-a8 diagonal for the light-squared bishop and eliminate the backward pawn on c6.



8...Bb7 Heavily analyzed alternatives are 8...Bd6 9.0-0 0-0 10.Qc2 Bb7 and the Reynolds Variation, 8...a6 9.e4 c5 10.d5 (or 10.e5 cxd4 11.Nxb5) 10...c4 11.dxe6 (or 11.Bc2) 11...fxe6.

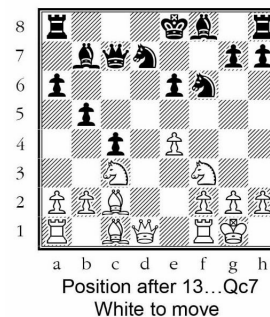
9.0-0 White can also play 9.a3 b4 10.Ne4 Nxe4 11.Bxe4 bxa3 12.0-0 or 9.e4 b4 10.Na4 c5 11.e5 Nd5 12.0-0.

9...a6 protecting the b5 pawn in order to play ...c5. Black can also play 9...b4.

10.e4 c5 11.d5 c4 12.dxe6 White can also play 12.Bc2.

12...fxe6 Black can also play 12...cxd3.

13.Bc2 Qc7 preventing White's pawn from safely advancing to e5.



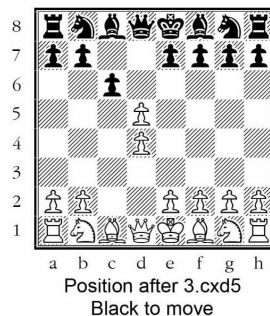
Black's king is uncastled and the weak e6 pawn can be attacked by White playing Ng5 or Nd4.

Black has a pawn majority and a space advantage on the queenside. Black's knights have a potential outpost on d3.

Play might continue 14.Qe2 Bd6 15.Ng5 Nc5 16.f4 h6
17.Nh3 e5.

Exchange Variation

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.cxd5 is the Exchange Variation of the Slav Defense.



After **3...cxd5**, the position has a symmetrical, potentially drawish pawn structure.

4.Nc3 Also playable for White are the developing moves 4.Nf3 and 4.Bf4.

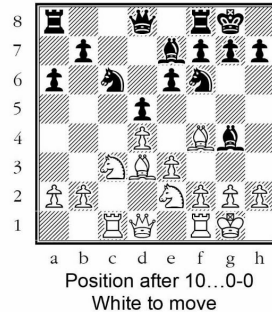
4...Nf6 Black can also play 4...Nc6 which often transposes into the lines below.

5.Bf4 Nc6 6.e3 a6 Other possible variations are 6...Bf5 7.Qb3 Na5 8.Qa4+ Bd7 9.Qc2 e6 and 6...e6 7.Nf3 Be7 8.Bd3 0-0 9.h3 Bd7 10.0-0 Qb6.

7.Bd3 7.Rc1 is an alternative for White.

7...Bg4 8.Nge2 White can also play 8.f3 Bh5 9.Nge2.

8...e6 9.0-0 Be7 Black can also develop the bishop to d6.
10.Rc1 0-0



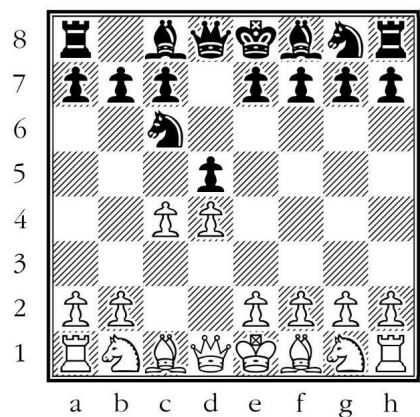
The pawn structure is symmetrical, all the minor pieces are developed, and both players are safely castled kingside.

White can break the pin and expand in the center by playing 11.f3 with the idea of later pushing the pawn to e4.

Black can oppose White's rook on the c-file by moving a rook to c8.

Both players may attempt to expand on the queenside by advancing the a- and b-pawns.

Chigorin Defense



Position after 2...Nc6
White to move

The Chigorin Defense, **1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nc6**, is named for Russian master Mikhail Chigorin, who lost two World Championship matches to Wilhelm Steinitz in the late 19th century.

Developing quickly with 2...Nc6 does not support the d5 pawn and blocks the c7 pawn.

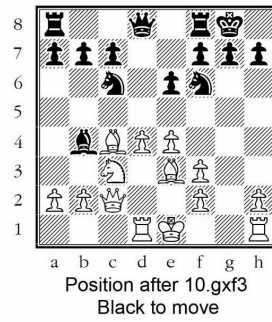
Black often has to give up the bishop pair to maintain a presence in the center.

3.Nc3 Other variations for White are 3.Nf3 Bg4 4.Nc3 e6 5.cxd5 exd5 6.Bf4 and 3.cxd5 Qxd5 4.e3 e5 5.Nc3 Bb4 6.Bd2 Bxc3 7.bxc3.

3...dxc4 Black can also choose 3...Nf6 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 e5.

4.Nf3 Nf6 5.e4 5.Bg5 is also playable.

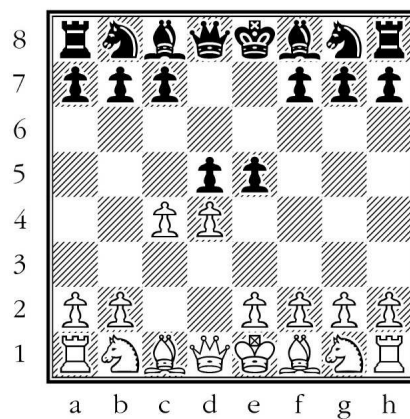
5...Bg4 6.Be3 e6 7.Bxc4 Bb4 8.Qc2 0-0 9.Rd1 Bxf3 10.gxf3



Black can play 10...Nh5, with the idea of 11...Qh4.

White has more space in the center, the bishop pair, and still plans to castle kingside despite the weakened pawn structure.

Albin Counter Gambit



Position after 2...e5
White to move

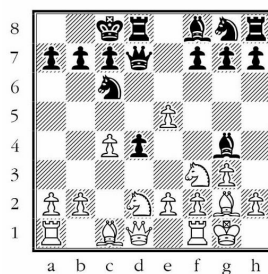
The Albin Counter Gambit, **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5**, is named for the late 19th and early 20th century Romanian master Adolf Albin.

Black offers the e-pawn in order to advance the d5 pawn to d4, invading White's half of the board and preventing White's knight from developing to c3.

3.exd5 d4 4.Nf3 Nc6 5.g3 Other choices for White are 5.a3 Nge7 6.b4 Ng6 7.Bb2 and 5.Nbd2 Bg4 6.h3.

5...Bg4 Black can also play 5...Nge7 6.Bg2 Ng6 or 5...Be6 6.Nbd2 Qd7 7.Bg2 Bh3.

6.Bg2 Qd7 7.Nbd2 0-0-0 8.0-0



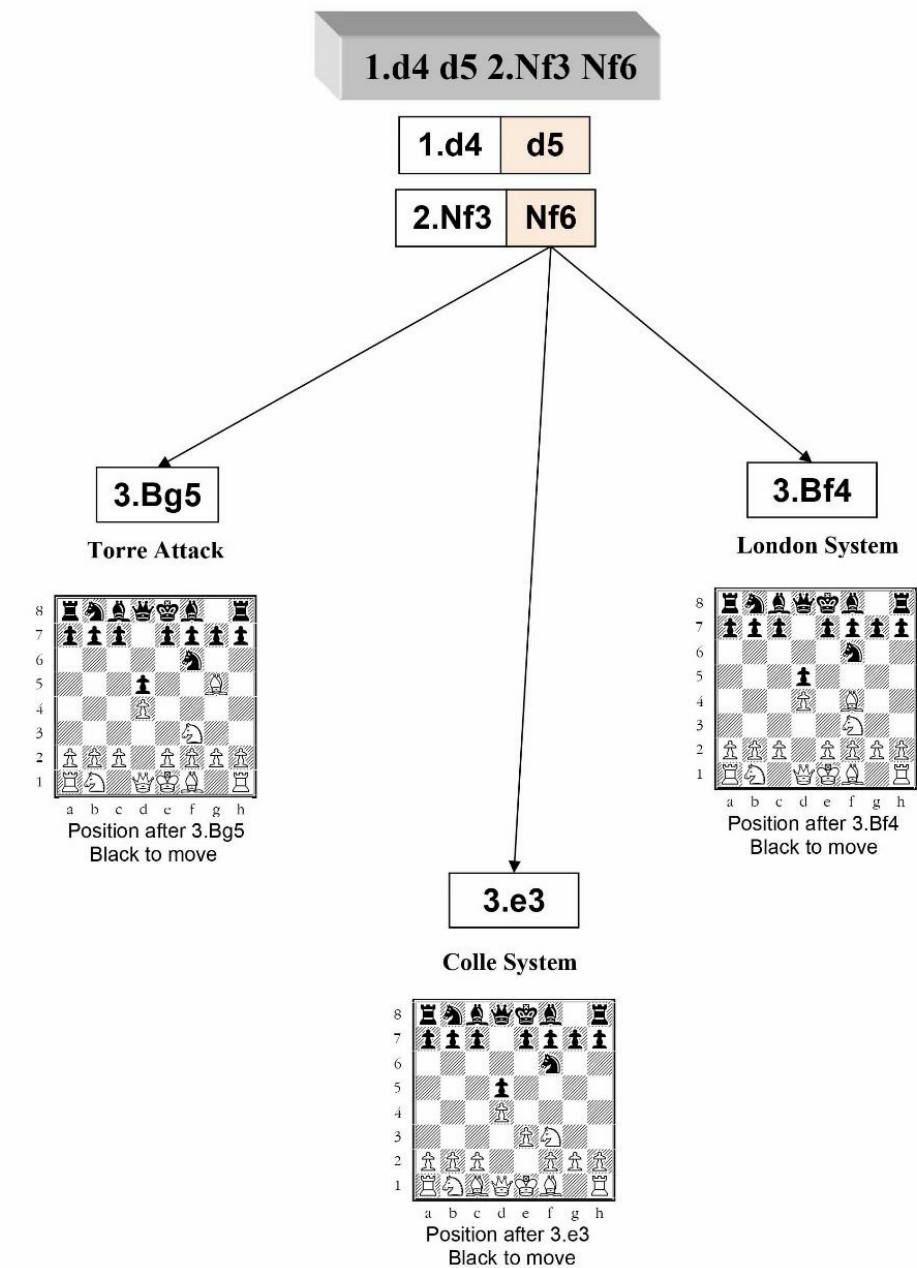
Position after 8.0-0
Black to move

The players castled on opposite sides; Black hasn't yet

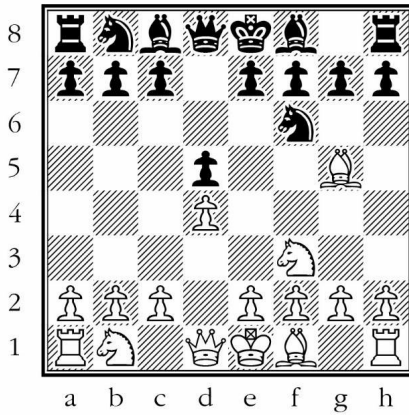
regained the sacrificed pawn.

Black can attack on the kingside with 8...Bh3 or 8...h5.

White plans to expand on the queenside with a3, b4, Qa4,
and Bb2.



Torre Attack



Position after 3.Bg5
Black to move

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bg5 is called the Torre Attack named for 20th century Mexican Grandmaster Carlos Torre Repetto.

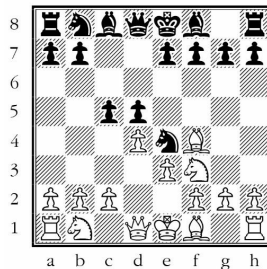
The bishop on g5 is referred to as the Torre bishop. The Torre Attack can arise from other move orders like 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.Bg5.

3...Ne4 Other options for Black are 3...c6, 3...Nbd7, 3...e6 4.e3 Be7, and 3...g6 4.Bxf6 exf6 5.e3 Bg7.

4.Bf4 4.Bh4 c5 5.dxc5 Nc6 6.e3 Qa5+ 7.Nbd2 is an alternative line for White.

4...c5 Black can also play 4...Bf5 or 4...c6.

5.e3 5.c3 is an alternative for White.

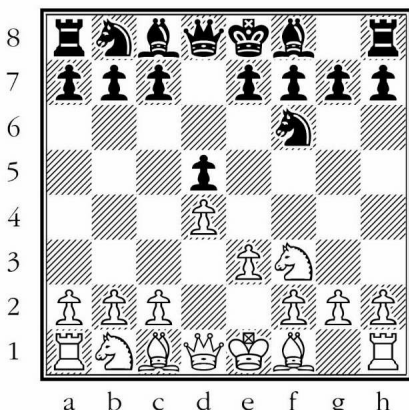


Position after 5.e3
Black to move

Both players have pieces to develop and plan to castle kingside.

The game could continue 5...Nc6 6.c3 Qb6 7.Qb3 c4 or 5... Qb6 6.Qc1 Nc6 7.c3 Bf5.

Colle System



Position after 3.e3
Black to move

The Colle System, **1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e3**, is named for 20th century Belgian master Edgard Colle.

White plans to castle kingside and make preparations to push the pawn to e4.

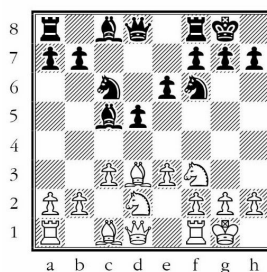
3...e6 Other choices for Black are 3...c6, 3...c5, 3...Bf5, 3...Bg4, and 3...g6.

4. Bd3 c5 Black can also play 4...Be7, 4...Bd6, 4...b6, or 4...Nbd7.

5.c3 White can choose to fianchetto the queenside bishop with 5.b3 Nc6 6.0-0 Bd6 7.Bb2.

5...Nc6 Black can also develop the knight with 5...Nbd7.

6.Nbd2 Bd6 7.0-0 0-0 8.dxc5 Bxc5

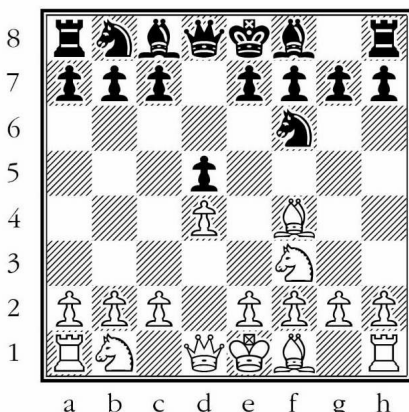


Position after 8...Bxc5
White to move

Both players are safely castled and need to develop the queenside bishops and rooks.

White can play 9.e4 or 9.Qe2 followed by 10.e4.

London System



Position after 3.Bf4
Black to move

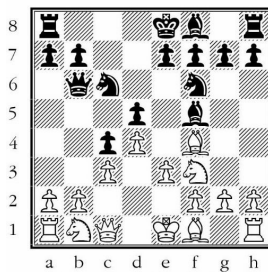
The London System, **1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bf4**, became fashionable after being played in a tournament in London in 1922.

Unlike the Colle System, White develops the dark-squared bishop outside the pawn chain before playing e3.

3...c5 Another variation for Black is **3...e6 4.e3 c5 5.c3 Nc6 6.Nbd2 Bd6**.

4.e3 Nc6 5.c3 Qb6 6.Qb3 c4 7.Qc2 White can also trade queens with **7.Qxb6 axb6**.

7...Bf5 8.Qc1 keeping the b2 pawn protected.



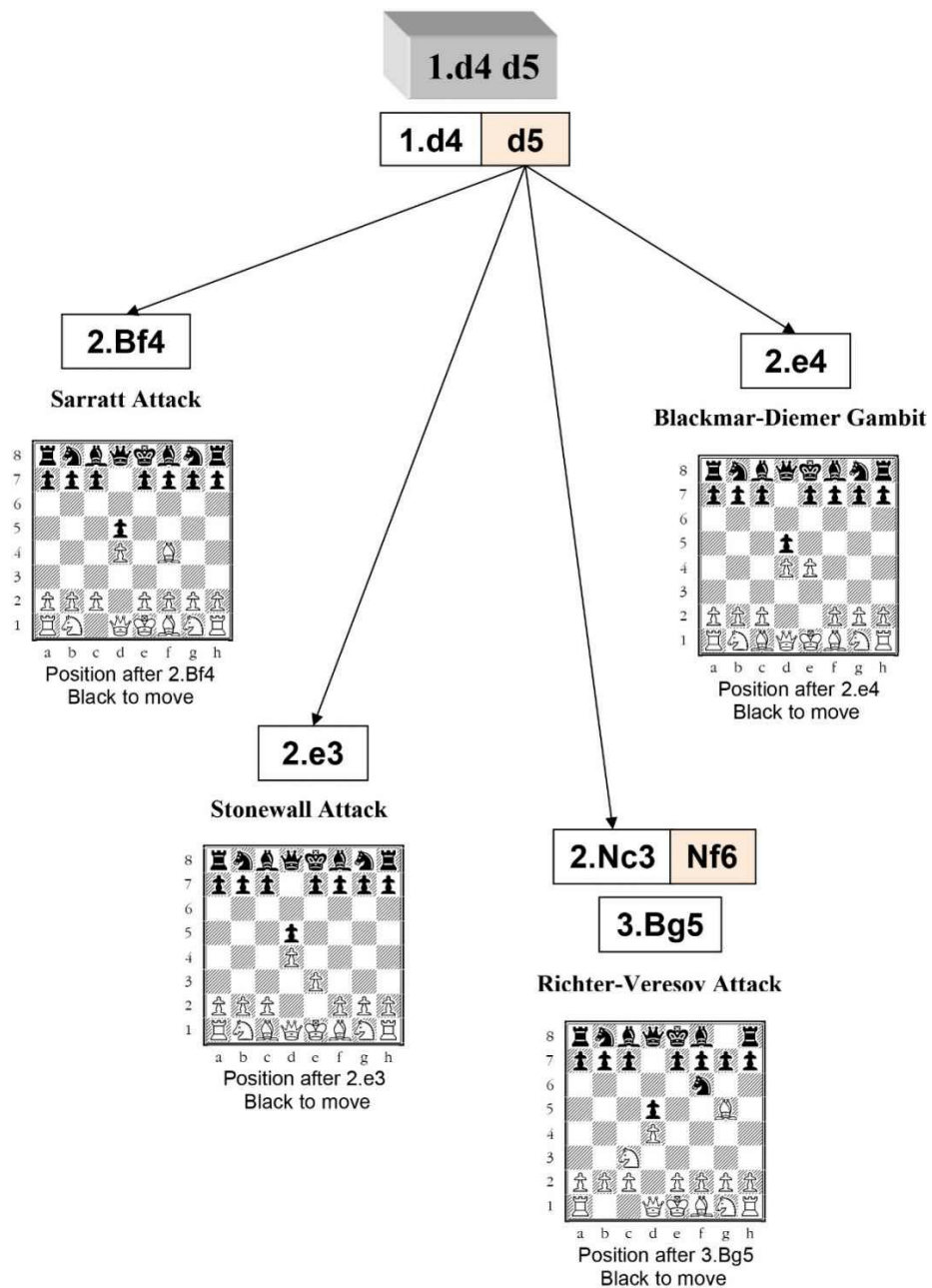
Position after 8.Qc1
Black to move

Both players need to develop the kingside bishops and plan to

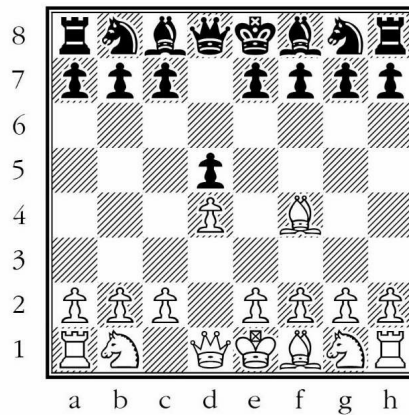
castle kingside.

A battle will likely take place over the important e4 and e5 center squares.

After Black plays 8...h6 or 8...e6, White can play 9.Nbd2 and then attack Black's c4 pawn with b3.



Sarratt Attack



Position after 2.Bf4
Black to move

1.d4 d5 2.Bf4 is called the Sarratt Attack named for English chess player Jacob Sarratt of the late 18th and early 19th century.

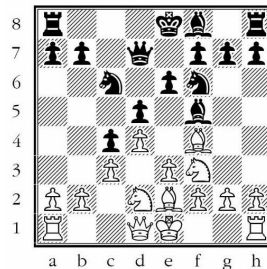
2...Nf6 Another variation is 2...c5 3.e3 Nc6 4.c3 Qb6 5.Qb3 c4.

3.e3 c5 Another variation Black can play is 3...g6 4.c4 Bg7 5.Nc3 0-0.

4.c3 White can also play 4.Nc3 cxd4 5.exd4.

4...Nc6 5.Nd2 Bf5 An alternative for Black is 5...cxd4 6.exd4 Bf5.

6.Qb3 Qd7 7.Ngf3 c4 8.Qd1 e6 9.Be2



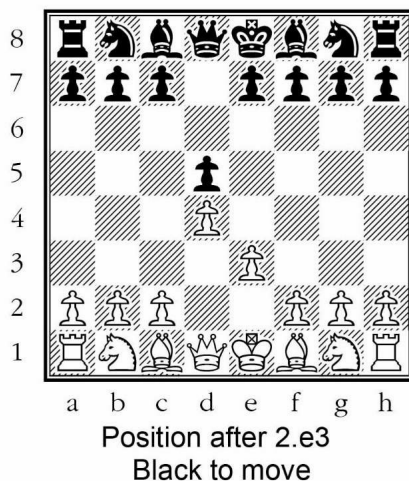
Position after 9.Be2
Black to move

Both players plan to castle kingside.

Since the Black pawn arrow points toward the queenside, pushing the b-pawn to b5 and b4 is a strategy for Black.

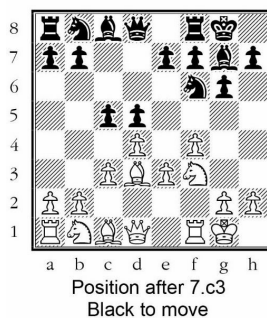
White would like to advance the e-pawn to e4 and expand on the kingside.

Stonewall Attack



1.d4 d5 2.e3 is called the Stonewall Attack. White plans to build a wall by placing the pawns on c3, d4, e3, and f4. The same pawn structure with the colors reversed occurs in the Stonewall Variation of the Dutch Defense.

2...Nf6 3.Bd3 g6 4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 c5 7.c3



White's dark-squared bishop is restricted by the White pawns in the center. It can develop Bd2-e1-h4 or fianchetto to b2 after the pawn moves to b3.

The b1 knight usually develops to d2.

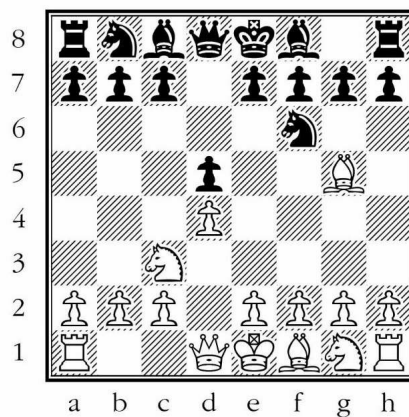
The pawn on f4 controls space on the kingside where White

may launch an attack.

Black's knight on b8 can develop to c6 or d7 and the light-squared bishop can be developed to g4, f5, or fianchettoed to b7.

Black would like to occupy the hole on e4 with a minor piece.

Richter-Veresov Attack



Position after 3.Bg5
Black to move

1.d4 d5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Bg5 is called the Richter-Veresov Attack named for 20th century International Masters Kurt Richter of Germany and Gavriil Veresov of Russia.

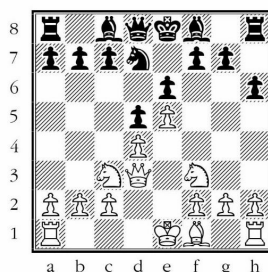
3...Nbd7 4.Qd3 Other options for White are 4.Nf3 h6 5.Bh4 e6 6.e3 Be7 7.Bd3 c5 8.0-0 and 4.e3 e6 5.a3 Be7 6.f4.

4...h6 An alternative line is 4...c6 5.e4 dxe4 6.Nxe4 Nxe4 7.Qxe4 Qb6.

5.Bxf6 White can also play 5.Bh4 c6 6.e4 Qa5 7.e5 Ne4 8.Nge2.

5...Nxf6 6.e4 e6 The game may also continue 6...dxe4 7.Nxe4 e6 8.0-0-0.

7.e5 Nd7 8.Nf3



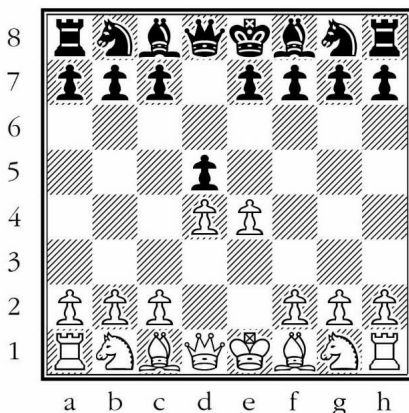
Position after 8.Nf3
Black to move

White plans to castle queenside while Black castles kingside.

Black plans on playing ...c5 to attack in the direction of the pawn arrow.

Both players have bishops to develop and Black would like to open the position for the bishop pair.

Blackmar-Diemer Gambit



Position after 2.e4
Black to move

The Blackmar-Diemer Gambit, **1.d4 d5 2.e4**, is named for 19th century New Orleans chess player Armand Blackmar and German master Emil Diemer.

Play normally continues **2...dxe4 3.Nc3**. **2...e6** transposes to the French Defense.

White plans **4.f3** to open the f-file and develop quickly to offset the cost of the pawn.

3...Nf6 Another variation is **3...e5 4.Nge2 Bb4 5.Bd2 Bxc3 6.Bxc3 exd4 7.Qxd4 Qxd4**.

4.f3 exf3 5.Nxf3 Bg4 Black can also play **5...e6 6.Bg5 Be7 7.Bd3 Nbd7**.

6.h3 Bh5 6...Bxf3 7.Qxf3 c6 is playable for Black.

7.g4 Bg6 8.Ne5 e6 9.Qf3 c6 10.g5 Nd5

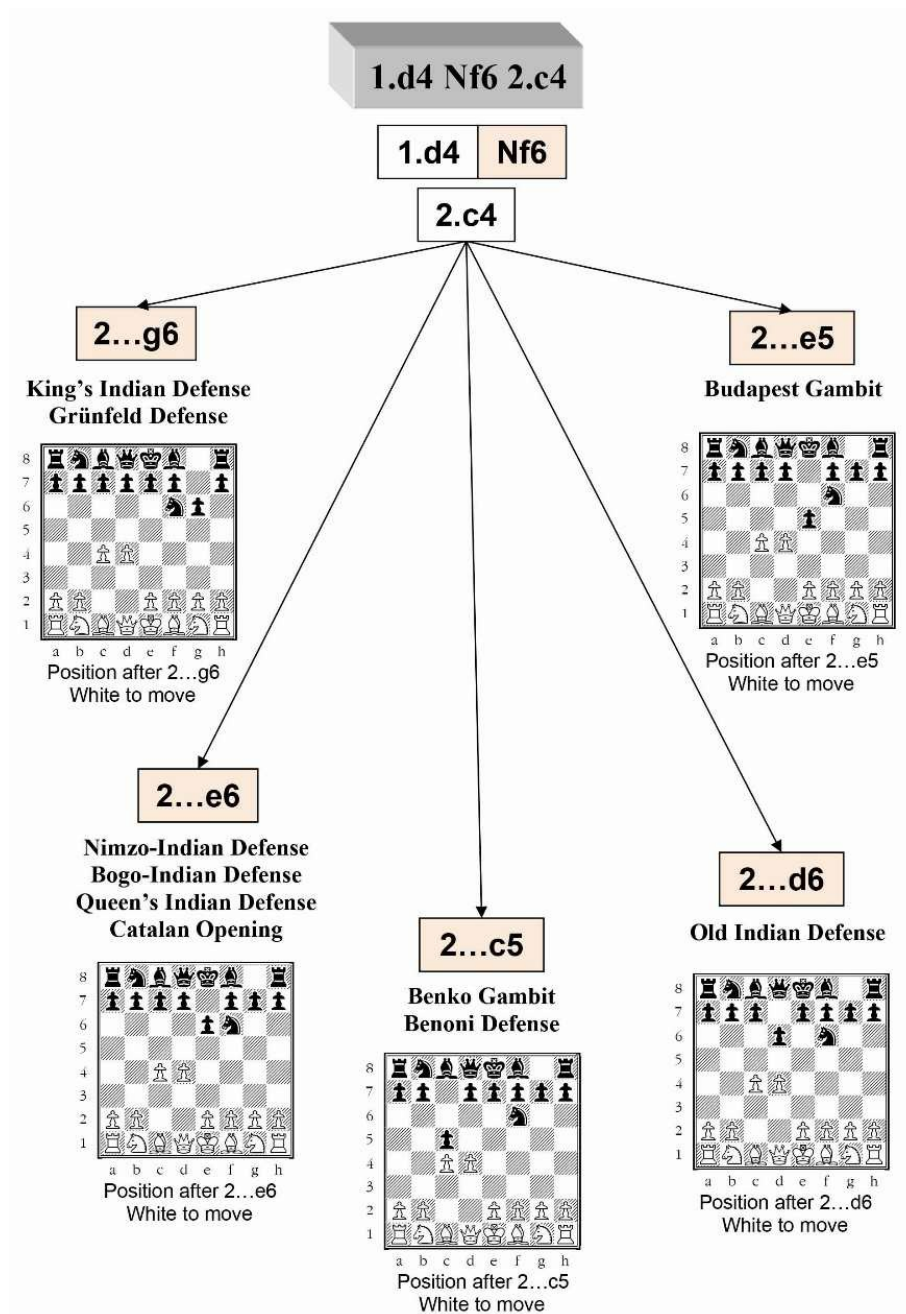


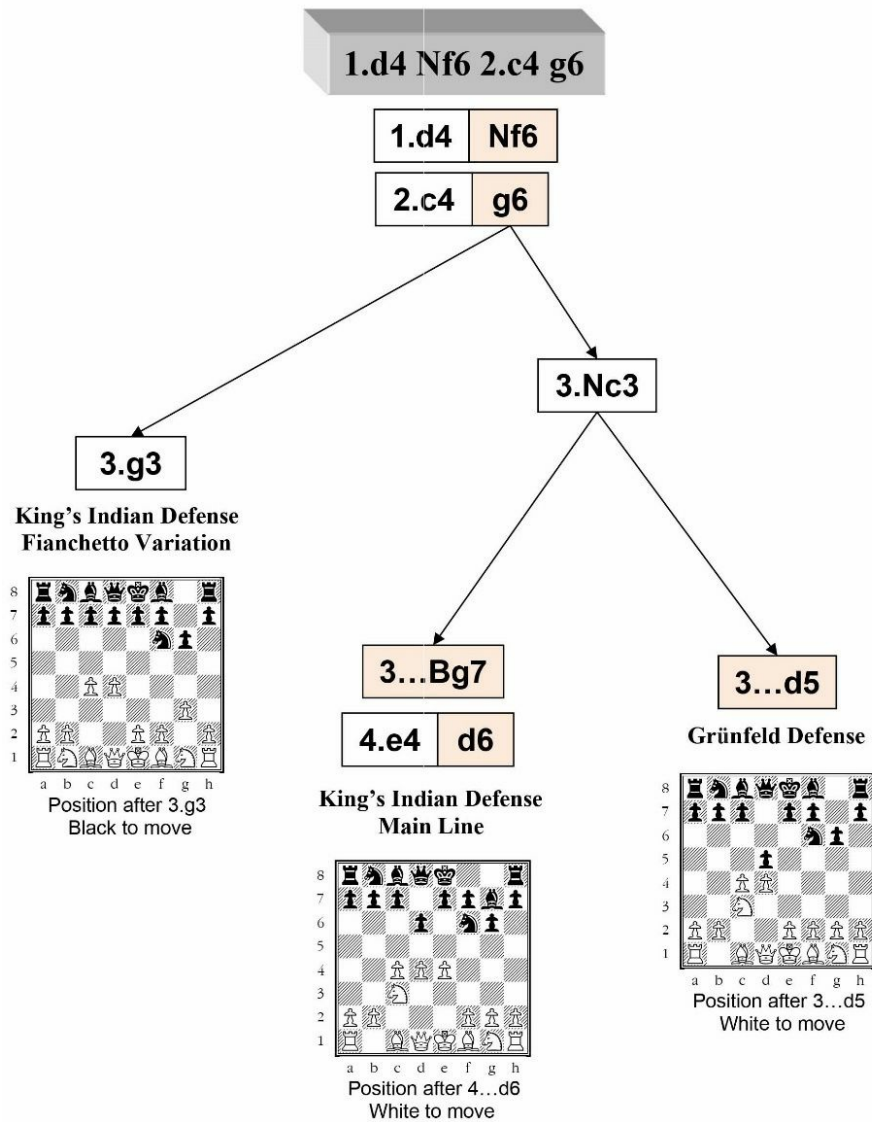
White has space on the kingside, a half-open f-file, and an aggressively placed knight on e5.

White needs to develop the bishops and may target the pawn on f7 and/or advance the h-pawn.

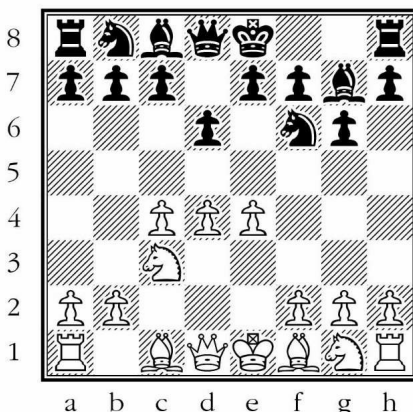
Black needs to develop the b8 knight (probably to d7) and the dark-squared bishop.

Black may consider castling queenside away from White's attack on the kingside.





King's Indian Defense



Position after 4...d6
White to move

The King's Indian Defense, **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6**, is a hypermodern opening that gained popularity in the 1930s.

Black allows White to occupy the center with pawns, with the plan of castling quickly and striking back to undermine the White center with ...e5 (or less frequently with ...c5).

When White plays d5 in response to ...e5, the center becomes locked with White planning to expand in the direction of the pawn arrow pointing to the queenside while Black plans to expand on the kingside.

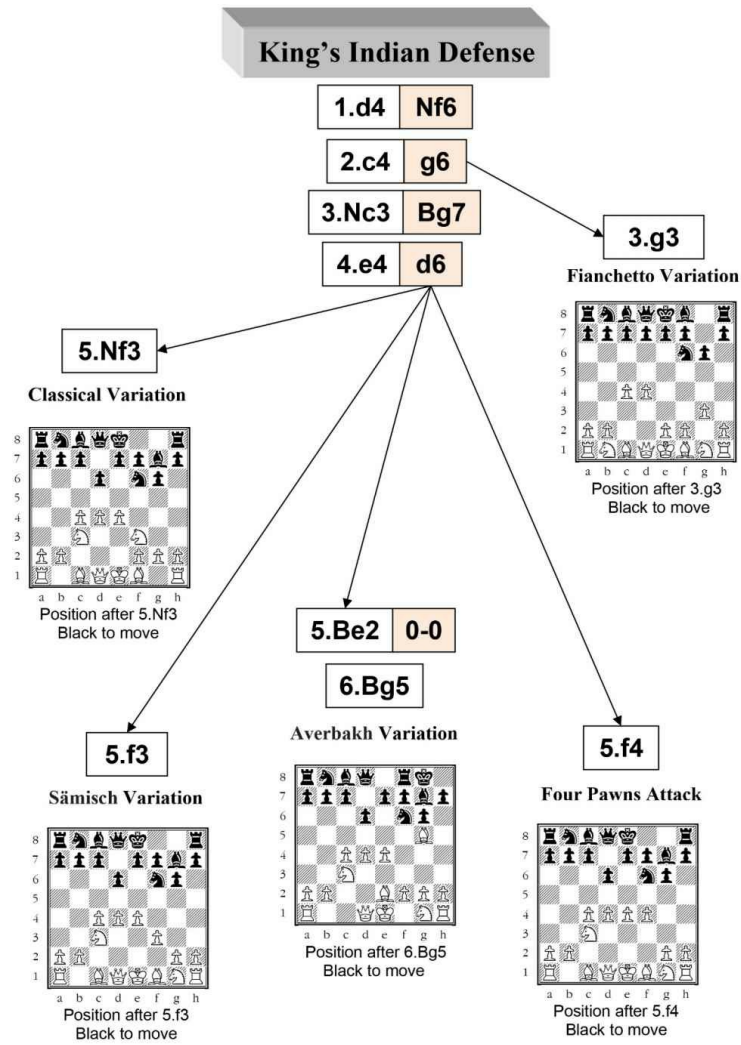
The player who breaks through first seizes the initiative and usually wins the game.

The Classical Variation of the King's Indian Defense occurs when White plays 5.Nf3.

In the Sämisch Variation, 5.f3, White usually plans on castling queenside.

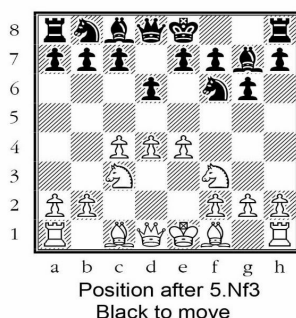
Less popular variations of the King's Indian Defense are the Averbakh Variation (5.Be2 0-0 6.Bg5) and the Four Pawns Attack (5.f4).

White delays playing e4 and first develops the bishop to g2 in the Fianchetto Variation.



Classical Variation

The popular Classical Variation of the King's Indian Defense is **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3**.



5...0-0 6.Be2 White can also play **6.Be3 e5 7.dxe5 dxe5 8.Qxd8 Rxd8 9.Nd5**.

6...e5 **6...Nbd7** and **6...Na6** can transpose into lines below. Other options for Black are **6...Bg4 7.Be3 Nfd7** and **6...c5 7.d5 e6 8.0-0 exd5 9.cxd5 Re8**.

7.0-0 White's other options are **7.Be3 Ng4 (7...exd4 8.Nxd4 Re8 9.f3 c6 10.Bf2 d5) 8.Bg5 f6 9.Bh4 g5 10.Bg3, 7.d5 a5 8.Bg5 h6 9.Bh4 Na6 10.Nd2, and 7.dxe5 dxe5 8.Qxd8 Rxd8 9.Bg5 Re8 10.Nd5 Nxd5 11.cxd5**.

7...Nc6 Other ideas for Black are **7...Na6 8.Be3 Ng4 9.Bg5 Qe8 10.dxe5 dxe5 11.h3 h6 12.Bd2 Nf6 13.Be3 Qe7 14.Nd5 Qd8, 7...Nbd7 8.Be3 Re8 9.d5 Nh5 10.g3 Bf8 11.Ne1 Ng7 12.Nd3 f5, and 7...exd4 8.Nxd4 Re8 9.f3 c6**.

8.d5 Ne7 White wants to attack on the queenside in the direction of the e4-d5 pawn arrow while Black attacks on the kingside in the direction of the d6-e5 pawn arrow.

White's most common responses are **9.Ne1, 9.b4, and 9.Nd2**.

9.Ne1

9.Ne1 unblocks the f-pawn with plan of moving the knight to d3.

9...Nd7 Black can also play 9...Ne8 with the idea of 10...f5.

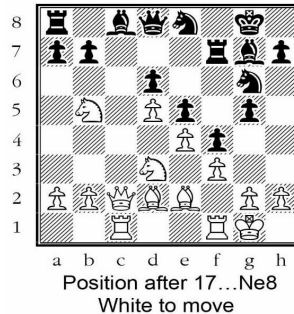
10.Nd3 Other variations are 10.f3 f5 11.g4 and 10.Be3 f5 11.f3 f4 12.Bf2 g5.

10...f5 11.Bd2 White can also play 11.f3.

11...Nf6 Black can also play 11...fxe4 12.Nxe4 Nf5.

12.f3 f4 13.c5 g5 14.Rc1 Ng6 15.cxd6 opening the c-file.
An alternative is 15.Nb5 Rf7 16.Ba5.

15...cxd6 16.Nb5 Rf7 17.Qc2 Ne8



Black has a bad dark-squared bishop and plans to continue the kingside attack with ideas like ...Bf8, ...Rg7, and ...h5 followed by ...g4.

White wants to attack quickly on the queenside and plans to defend against a Black kingside pawn advance on g4 by playing h3 and Nf2.

9.b4

9.b4 is called the Bayonet Variation. With the knight on f3, White considers Ng5-e6 after Black plays ...f5.

9...Nh5 with the idea of advancing the knight to f4. After 9...a5 10.Ba3 axb4 11.Bxb4 b6, White can play 12.a4 with the idea of pushing the pawn to a5.

10.Re1 White can also play 10.c5, 10.Nd2, or 10.g3 (to prevent ...Nf4).

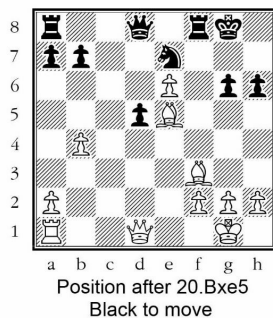
10...f5 Alternatives for Black are 10...a5 and 10...Nf4 11.Bf1 a5 12.bxa5 Rxa5.

11.Ng5 Nf6 12.Bf3 Another line for White is 12.f3 Kh8 13.c5.

12...c6 13.Bb2 White can also play 13.b5, 13.Ba3, or 13.Be3.

13...h6 14.Ne6 inviting a long series of captures.

14...Bxe6 15.dxe6 fxe4 16.Nxe4 Nxe4 17.Rxe4 d5 18.cxd5 cxd5 19.Rxe5 Bxe5 20.Bxe5



White sacrificed the exchange for the bishop pair and a dangerous passed pawn on e6.

Black might play 20...Qb6 to connect the rooks and attack the b4 and e6 pawns.

Black's king is partially exposed due to the advancement of the g- and h-pawns.

9.Nd2

Other rarely played moves are 9.Bd2, 9.Be3, 9.Bg5, 9.a4, 9.Qc2, and 9.Kh1.

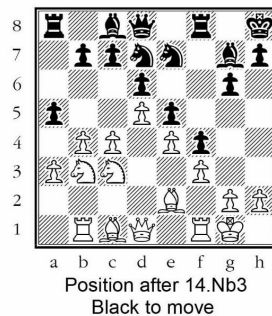
9...a5 Alternatives for Black are 9...Ne8, 9...Nd7, 9...c5, and 9...c6.

10.a3 Nd7 Black can also play 10...Bd7 11.b3 c6 12.Bb2

Qb6.

11.Rb1 f5 12.b4 Kh8 13.f3 An alternative for White is
13.Qc2 Ng8 14.f3 Ngf6 15.Nb5 axb4 16.axb4 Nh5 17.g3
Ndf6 18.c5.

13...f4 14.Nb3



White's knight threatens the a5 pawn and protects c5 in order to advance the c-pawn.

Once the pawn moves to c5, White plans to capture on d6 to open lines on the queenside.

Black plans to advance the pawn to g5 and g4 with the support of the pieces, with the goal of breaking in on the kingside and checkmating White's king.

Sämisch Variation

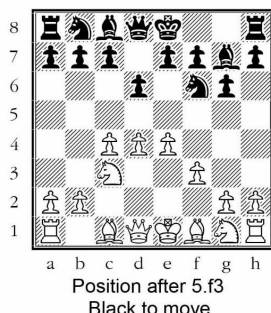
The Sämisch Variation of the King's Indian Defense, **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.f3**, is named for German Grandmaster Friedrich Sämisch who developed the theory for the opening in the 1920s.

White delays developing on the kingside in order to strengthen the pawn center.

The pawn on f3 keeps Black's minor pieces off g4 and supports the g-pawn's advancement to g4.

The downside to f3 is it weakens the dark squares near

White's king and blocks the natural f3 development square of the g1 knight.



Whites often develops the bishop to e3, queen to d2 (with the idea of Bh6), castles queenside, and advances the g- and h-pawns to attack Black's castled king on the kingside.

After castling kingside, Black plans ...c5 or ...e5 to challenge White for the center as well as ...b5 to expand on the queenside.

Opposite side castling is often the main theme in the Sämisch Variation.

5...0-0 6.Be3 A couple other lines for White are 6.Bg5 c5 7.d5 e6 8.Qd2 exd5 9.cxd5 a6 10.a4 Re8 11.Be3 and 6.Nge2 c5 7.d5 e6 8.Ng3 exd5 9.cxd5 a6 10.a4 Nbd7 11.Be2.

Black's main choices are 6...Nc6, 6...c5, and 6...e5.

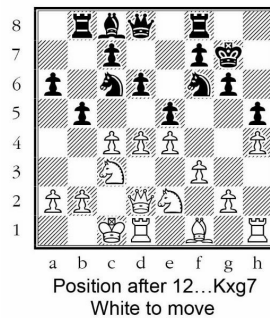
6...Nc6

7.Nge2 a6 8.Qd2 Rb8 9.h4 Alternatives for White are 9.Rc1 Bd7 10.Nd1 b5 11.c5 and 9.Nc1 e5 10.d5 Nd4 11.Nb3 c5 12.dxc6.

9...h5 10.0-0-0 b5 11.Bh6 White can also play 11.Nf4 or 11.Nd5.

11...e5 12.Bxg7 Another variation is 12.Nd5 bxc4 13.Nxf6+ Bxf6 14.d5 Nb4 15.Nc3.

12...Kxg7



White has a little more space in the center.

Opposite side castling is a main middlegame theme.

A couple of possible continuations are 13.dxe5 dxe5 14.Qe3 and 13.d5 Na5 14.Ng3 bxc4 15.Be2.

6...c5

7.Nge2 A variation where White accepts the pawn sacrifice is 7.dxc5 dxc5 8.Qxd8 Rxd8 9.Bxc5 Nc6 10.Nge2 Nd7 11.Be3 Nde5 12.Nf4 Nb4 13.Rc1 Be6 14.b3.

7...Nc6 Alternative moves for Black are 7...Qa5 and 7...cxd4.

8.d5 White can also play 8.Qd2 Qa5 9.d5.

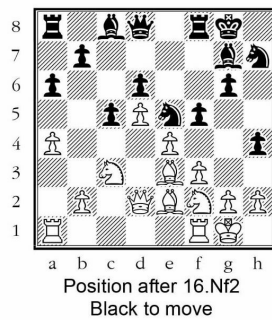
8...Ne5 Black can also play 8...Na5.

9.Ng3 e6 10.Be2 exd5 11.cxd5 a6 An alternative for Black is 11...h5.

12.a4 h5 Black can also play 12...Bd7.

13.O-O Nh7 preventing Bg5 and preparing ...f5.

14.Qd2 h4 15.Nh1 f5 16.Nf2



Black has a number of reasonable moves to choose from:
16...Re8, 16...fxe4, 16...Qf6, 16...Bd7, and 16...b6.

The main battle should take place in the center and kingside.

6...e5

A couple of rare variations available for Black are 6...a6 7.Qd2 c6 (7...Nbd7 8.Nge2 c5 9.dxc5 dxc5) 8.Bd3 b5 and 6...Nbd7 7.Qd2 c5 8.Nge2 a6.

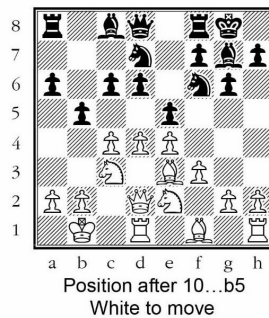
7.Nge2 White can also play 7.d5 Nh5 8.Qd2 f5 9.0-0-0.

7...c6 An alternative for Black is 7...Nc6 8.d5 Ne7.

8.Qd2 Nbd7 8...exd4 9.Nxd4 d5 is also playable.

9.0-0-0 Another line for White is 9.d5 cxd5 10.cxd5 a6 11.g4 h5 12.g5 Nh7 13.Rg1.

9...a6 10.Kb1 b5 attacking on the queenside.

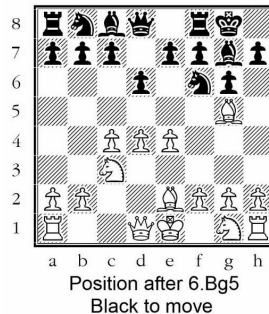


Opposite side castling is the main middlegame theme.

The game might continue 11.Nc1 exd4 12.Bxd4 b4 13.Na4, 11.c5 b4 12.Na4 Qa5 13.b3, or 11.d5 c5.

Averbakh Variation

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Be2 0-0 6.Bg5 is the Averbakh Variation of the King's Indian Defense named for 20th and 21st century Russian Grandmaster and author Yuri Averbakh.



6...c5 Other variations Black can choose are 6...Na6 7.Qd2 e5 8.d5 c6 9.f3 cxd5 10.cxd5 Bd7, 6...h6 7.Be3 c5 8.d5 e6 9.Qd2 exd5 10.exd5 Kh7, 6...a6 7.Qd2 c5 8.d5 b5 9.cxb5 Qa5, or 6...Nbd7 7.Qd2 e5 8.d5 Nc5 9.f3 a5 10.0-0-0 Bd7 11.Kb1 Qe8 12.g4.

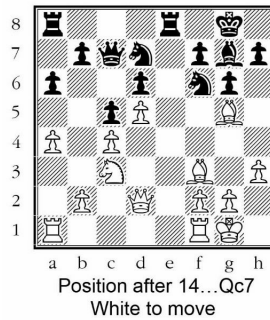
7.d5 Another variation is 7.dxc5 Qa5 8.Bd2 Qxc5 9.Nf3.

7...e6 Black can also play 7...h6 8.Bf4 a6 or sacrifice a pawn by playing 7...b5 8.cxb5 a6 9.a4 Qa5.

8.Qd2 White can also play 8.Nf3.

8...exd5 9.exd5 Re8 Another variation is 9...Qb6 10.Nf3 Bf5 11.Nh4 Ne4 12.Nxe4 Bxe4 13.f3 Qxb2 14.Rc1.

10.Nf3 Bg4 11.0-0 Nbd7 12.h3 Bxf3 13.Bxf3 a6 14.a4 Qc7



The pawn structure is symmetrical and both players have developed the minor pieces and connected the rooks on the back ranks.

White has the bishop pair, but the light-squared bishop is restricted by the pawn on d5.

White may play 15.a5 with the idea of capturing *en passant* if Black plays ...b5.

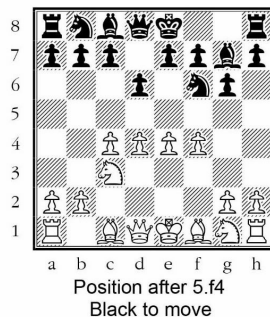
Black has ideas like ...Ne5 and ...Qb6.

Four Pawns Attack

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.f4 is the aggressive Four Pawns Attack variation of the King's Indian Defense.

White creates a massive pawn center at the cost of falling behind in development and the risk of overextending the center pawns.

Other occasionally played fifth moves by White are 5.h3, 5.Bd3, 5.Nge2, 5.Bg5, and 5.g3.



5...0-0 Another variation Black can play is 5...c5 6.d5 0-0 7.Nf3 e6 8.dxe6 fxe6 9.Bd3 Nc6 10.0-0 Nd4.

6.Nf3 c5 Black can also play 6...Na6 7.Bd3 Bg4 8.0-0 Nd7 9.Be3 e5 10.fxe5 c5 or 6...e5 7.fxe5 dxe5.

7.d5 Alternatives for White are 7.dxc5 Qa5 8.Bd3 Qxc5 9.Qe2 Bg4 10.Be3 Qa5 11.0-0 Nc6 12.Rac1 and 7.Be2 cxd4 8.Nxd4 Nc6 9.Be3.

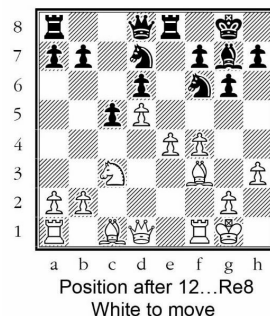
7...e6 Black can sacrifice a pawn with 7...b5 8.cxb5 a6 9.a4 axb5 10.Bxb5 Ba6.

8.Be2 Another line is 8.dxe6 fxe6 9.Bd3 Nc6 10.0-0 Nd4.

8...exd5 9.cxd5 White can also play 9.exd5 Re8 10.0-0.

9...Bg4 Black can also play 9...Re8 10.e5 dxe5 11.fxe5 Ng4 12.e6 fxe6 13.d6 Bd7 (or 13...Nc6).

10.0-0 Nbd7 11.h3 Bxf3 12.Bxf3 Re8 Black can also play 12...a6.



White has the bishop pair and attacking chances on the kingside.

Black wants to prevent White from moving the pawn to e5 and would like to expand on the queenside with ...a6 and ...b5.

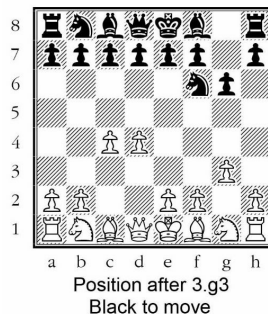
The game might continue 13.g4 h6 14.Qc2.

Fianchetto Variation

The Fianchetto Variation of the King's Indian Defense, **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3**, is a positional approach to the King's Indian where White delays expanding in the center until completing kingside development and castling.

White's king is safe after castling kingside in the Fianchetto Variation.

Black plans to castle kingside and either challenge White in the center or expand on the queenside.



3...Bg7 4.Bg2 0-0 Black can also challenge White's pawn center with 4...d5. Play might then continue 5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.Nf3 Nb6 7.Nc3 Nc6 8.e3 0-0 9.0-0 Re8 10.Re1 a5 11.Qe2 Be6.

5.Nc3 White can also play 5.Nf3 or 5.e4.

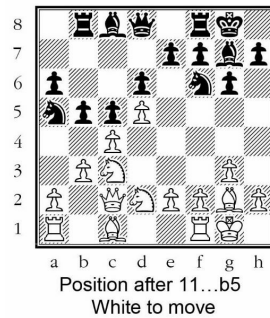
5...d6 6.Nf3 Nc6 Black's main alternative is 6...Nbd7. The game might continue 7.0-0 e5 8.e4 c6 (or 8...exd4 9.Nxd4 Re8) 9.h3 Qa5 10.Re1 exd4 11.Nxd4 Ne5 12.Bf1

Re8.

7.0-0 a6 Alternatives for Black are 7...Bf5, 7...Bg4, 7...Rb8, and 7...e5.

8.d5 White can also play 8.Qd3 e5 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.Qxd8 Rxd8 11.Bg5, 8.h3 Rb8 9.e4 b5 10.cxb5 axb5 11.Re1, 8.b3 Rb8 9.Nd5 Nh5 10.Bb2, or 8.Bf4 Rb8 9.Rc1.

8...Na5 9.Nd2 c5 10.Qc2 Rb8 11.b3 b5

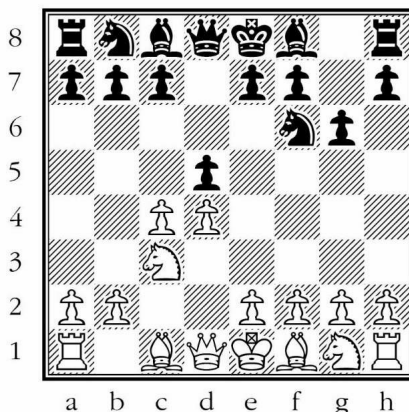


Black has pressure on the c4 pawn and can open the b-file by playing ...bxc4.

Black can also challenge White's center by advancing the e-pawn with ...e6 or ...e5.

White plans to fianchetto the dark-squared bishop and expand in the center with e4 and possibly f4.

Grünfeld Defense



Position after 3...d5
White to move

The Grünfeld Defense, **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5**, is named for Austrian Grandmaster and author Ernst Grünfeld who played it in Vienna in 1922.

The Grünfeld Defense often leads to open tactical positions.

White typically obtains a big pawn center which Black plans to attack in hypermodern fashion.

The most common line is the Exchange Variation which occurs after **4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 Bg7**, leaving White with a pawn center and a number of ways to develop the pieces. Black usually attacks the center with **...c5** often followed by some combination of **...cxd4**, **...Nc6**, **...Qa5**, and **...Bg4**.

The game can also continue **4.Nf3 Bg7**, the Three Knights Variation.

Grünfeld Defense

1.d4 Nf6

2.c4 g6

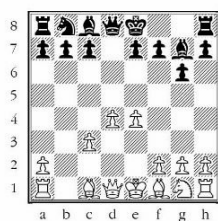
3.Nc3 d5

4.cxd5 Nxd5

5.e4 Nxc3

6.bxc3 Bg7

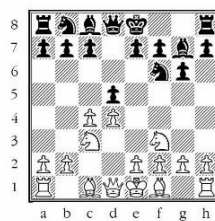
Exchange Variation



Position after 6...Bg7
White to move

4.Nf3 Bg7

Three Knights Variation



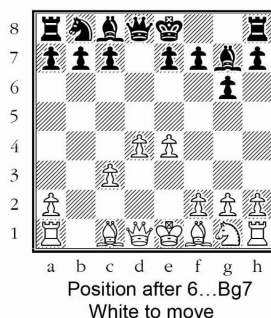
Position after 4...Bg7
White to move

Exchange Variation

After **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5**, White usually attacks the knight on d5 with **5.e4**.

White can also protect the knight with **5.Bd2**. A sample line is **5...Bg7 6.e4 Nb6 7.Be3 0-0 8.h3 e5 9.Nf3 exd4 10.Bxd4 Be6 11.Bxg7 Kxg7 12.Qd4+ f6 13.Be2**.

The usual continuation is **5...Nxc3 6.bxc3 Bg7**.



White's main choices are **7.Bc4** and **7.Nf3**.

Other variations White can choose are:

7.Be3 c5 8.Qd2 Qa5 9.Rc1 0-0 10.Nf3 Rd8 11.d5,
7.Bg5 c5 8.Rc1 0-0 9.Nf3 Bg4 10.d5 Qd6 11.Be2 Nd7
12.0-0,
7.Qa4+ Nd7 8.Nf3 0-0 9.Bg5 c5 10.Rc1 Qc7 11.Bd3, and
7.Bb5+ c6 8.Ba4 0-0 9.Ne2 c5 10.0-0 Nc6 11.Be3 Na5
12.Rb1.

7.Bc4

7.Bc4 is the Classical Variation.

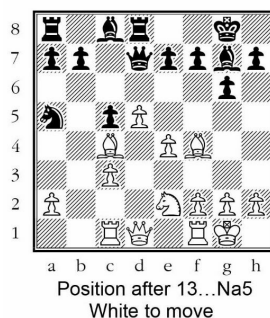
7...c5 Black can also play **7...0-0 8.Ne2 Nc6 9.0-0 b6**
10.Be3 Bb7.

8.Ne2 Nc6 9.Be3 0-0 10.0-0 Qc7 Black can also play 10...Bg4 11.f3 Bd7 12.Rb1 Rc8 13.Bd3 Qc7, 10...Na5 11.Bd3 b6 12.Qd2 e5, or 10...b6 11.Qd2 Bb7.

11.Rc1 Rd8 12.Bf4 Qd7 Another line is 12...Be5 13.Bxe5 Nxe5 14.Bb3 Ng4 15.Ng3 Qf4.

13.d5 White can also play 13.dxc5 Qe8 14.Bd5.

13...Na5 attacking the bishop.



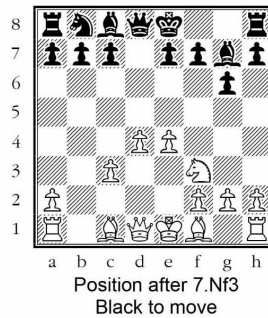
Both kings are safely castled kingside.

White has more space in the center and can retreat the bishop to d3 to preserve the bishop pair.

Black's g7 bishop is on a relatively open diagonal but the bishop on c8 and rook on a8 need to be developed.

7.Nf3

7.Nf3, developing the knight to the natural f3 square, is called the Modern Exchange Variation.



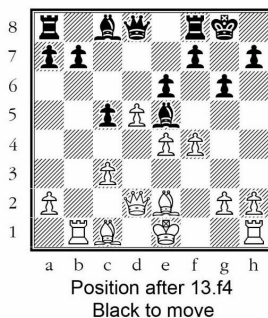
Black usually responds **7...c5** attacking the d4 center pawn.

8.Rb1 Other variations White can choose are 8.Be3 Qa5 9.Qd2 0-0 10.Rc1 Rd8 11.d5 e6 12.Bg5 f6 13.Bf4 and 8.Bb5+ Nc6 9.0-0 cxd4 10.cxd4 0-0 11.Be3 Bg4 12.Bxc6 bxc6 13.Rc1.

8...0-0 9.Be2 Nc6 Black can also play 9...b6 10.0-0 Bb7 11.Qd3 e6 12.Bg5 Qc7 13.Qe3 Nd7 14.e5 Rae8 15.Bb5 Bc6 or 9...cxd4 10.cxd4 Qa5+ 11.Bd2 Qxa2 12.0-0 Bg4 13.Bg5 h6 14.Be3 Nc6 15.d5 Bxf3 16.Bxf3 Ne5.

10.d5 Ne5 10...Bxc3+ 11.Bd2 Bxd2+ 12.Qxd2 Na5 13.h4 Bg4 14.h5 Bxf3 15.gxf3 e5 is another line for Black.

11.Nxe5 Bxe5 12.Qd2 e6 13.f4 forcing the bishop to retreat.



Both players need to develop the queenside bishops.

White plans on castling kingside and has a pawn majority in

the center that Black will try to undermine.

Possible continuations are 13...Bg7 14.c4 b6 and 13...Bc7 14.0-0 exd5 15.exd5 Ba5.

Three Knights Variation

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Nf3 Bg7 is the Three Knights Variation of the Grünfeld Defense.



The Russian Variation, **5.Qb3**, is White's most popular response.

Other possible lines are:

5.Bg5 Ne4 6.Bh4 Nxc3 7.bxc3 dxc4 8.Qa4+,
5.Bf4 0-0 6.e3 c5 7.dxc5 Qa5 8.Rc1 dxc4 9.Bxc4,
5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.e4 Nxc3 7.bxc3 c5 8.Rb1,
5.e3 0-0 6.b4 b6 7.Ba3 c5 8.bxc5 bxc5 9.Rc1, and
5.Qa4+ Bd7 6.Qb3 dxc4 7.Qxc4 0-0 8.Bf4.

5...dxc4 6.Qxc4 0-0 7.e4 a6 Black can also play 7...Nc6 8.Be2 Bg4 9.d5 Na5 10.Qb4 Bxf3 11.Bxf3 c6 12.0-0 Qb6 13.Qa4 Nd7, 7...Na6 8.Be2 c5 9.d5 e6 10.0-0 exd5 11.exd5 Bf5, 7...Bg4 8.Be3 Nfd7 9.Rd1 Nb6 10.Qb3 e6, 7...c6 8.Be2 Be6 9.Qd3 Bg4 10.Be3 Qa5, or 7...b6 8.Bf4 c5 9.d5 Ba6 10.Qa4 Bxf1 11.Kxf1 Nbd7.

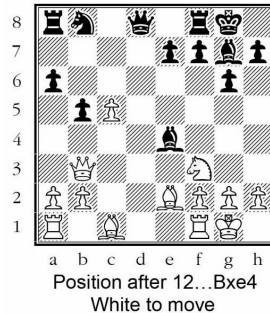
8.Be2 White can consider the aggressive 8.e5 b5 9.Qb3 Nfd7 10.e6.

8...b5 9.Qb3 c5 After 9...Nc6 10.e5 Be6, White can give up the queen for three minor pieces and two pawns with 11.exf6 Bxb3 12.fxg7 Kxg7 13.axb3 Nxd4 14.Nxd4 Qxd4 15.0-0.

10.dxc5 Bb7 Black can also play 10...Be6 11.Qc2 Nbd7 12.Be3 Rc8 or 10...Nbd7 11.e5 Nxc5 12.Qb4 Nfd7.

11.0-0 Another option for White is 11.e5 Nfd7 12.Be3.

11...Nxe4 12.Nxe4 Bxe4

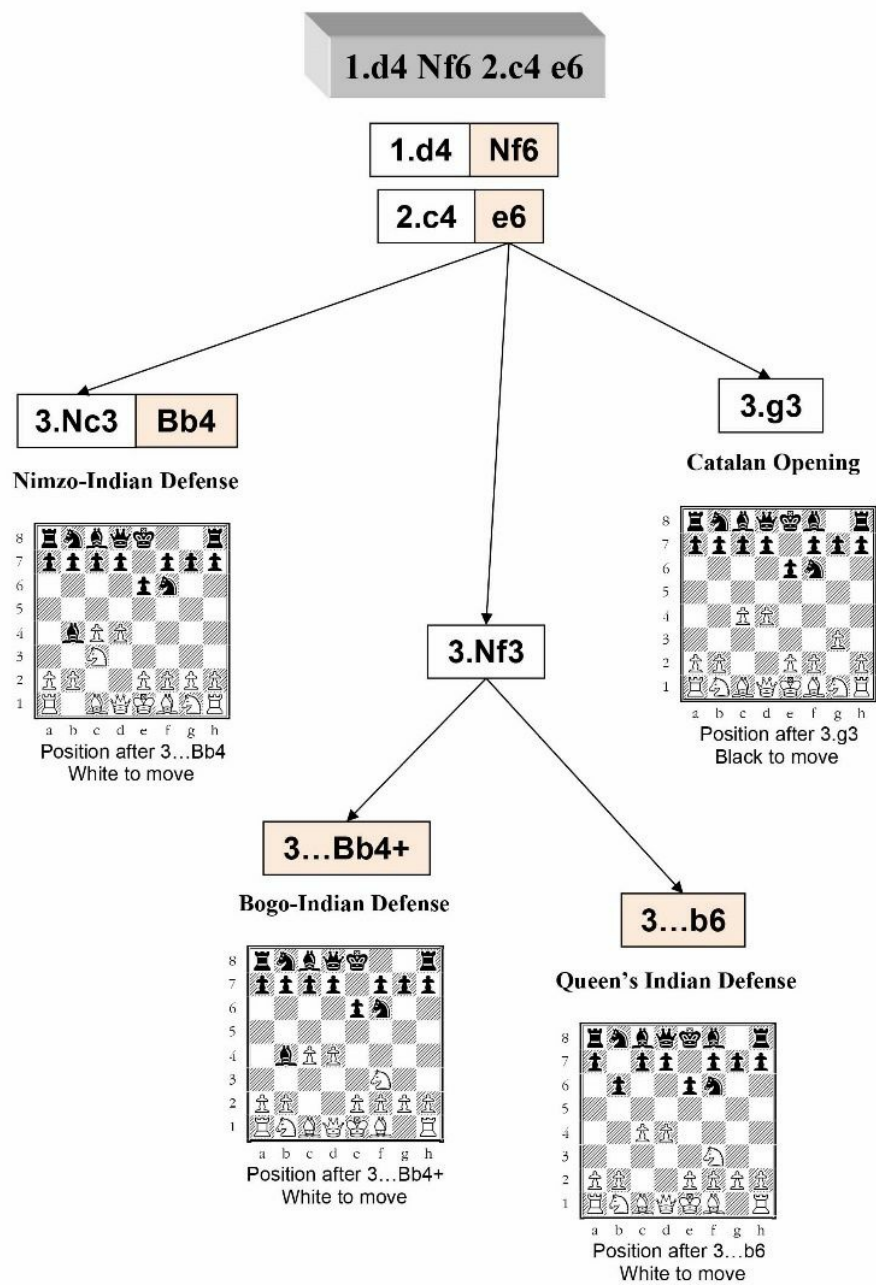


Both players are safely castled and have a couple of queenside pieces to develop.

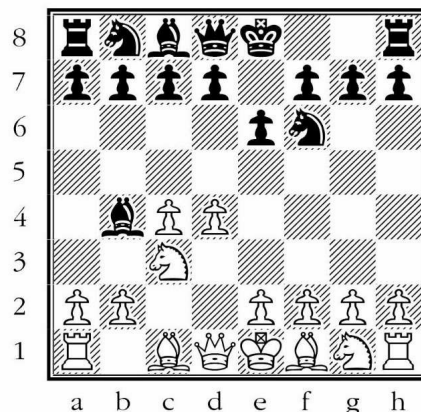
White has a pawn majority and a passed c-pawn on the queenside while Black has a pawn majority on the kingside.

Black's bishops are more active than White's.

A possible continuation is 13.Bf4 Bd5 14.Qe3 Nc6.



Nimzo-Indian Defense



Position after 3...Bb4
White to move

The Nimzo-Indian Defense, **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4**, is named for Latvian Grandmaster, author, and hypermodernist Aron Nimzowitsch who introduced it in the early 20th century.

Black doesn't commit the center pawns and quickly develops the bishop to pin the knight, reducing White's control of the e4 and d5 squares.

Black often trades the bishop for the knight giving up the bishop pair to double White's c-pawns. If this occurs, Black would like to lock up the center to restrict White's bishops.

The Classical Variation, 4.Qc2, and Rubenstein Variation, 4.e3, are White's most popular responses.

Other frequently played fourth moves for White are 4.Nf3 (Three Knights Variation), 4.f3 (Gheorghiu Variation), and 4.Bg5 (Leningrad Variation).

Nimzo-Indian Defense

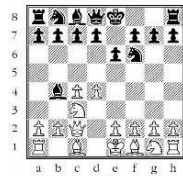
1.d4 Nf6

2.c4 e6

3.Nc3 Bb4

4.Qc2

Classical Variation



4.Nf3

Three Knights Variation



4.Bg5

Leningrad Variation



4.e3

Rubinstein Variation



4.f3

Gheorghiu Variation

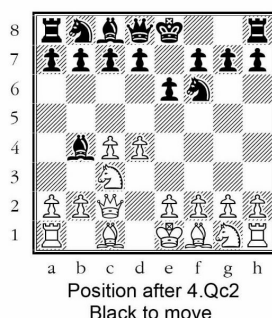


Classical Variation

The Classical Variation (sometimes called the Capablanca Variation named for the Cuban World Champion of the early 20th century) is **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2**.

White avoids doubled c-pawns by preparing to recapture on c3 with the queen.

A less common way to protect the knight with the queen is 4.Qb3 c5 5.dxc5 Nc6 6.Nf3 Ne4 7.Bd2 Nxd2 8.Nxd2.



4...0-0 Alternative lines for Black are 4...d5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.Qxc3 Ne4 7.Qc2 c5 8.dxc5 Nc6 9.cxd5 exd5 10.Nf3 Bf5, 4...c5 5.dxc5 0-0 6.a3 Bxc5 7.Nf3 b6 8.Bf4 Bb7 9.Rd1 Nc6, and 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 d6 6.Bd2 0-0 7.a3 Bxc3 8.Bxc3 Qe7 9.e3 e5.

5.a3 White can also play 5.e4 d5 6.e5 Ne4 7.Bd3 c5 8.Nf3.

5...Bxc3+ 6.Qxc3 b6 Other ideas for Black are 6...d5 7.Nf3 dxc4 8.Qxc4 b6 9.Bg5 Ba6 10.Qa4 c5 11.dxc5 bxc5, 6...d6 7.Bg5 Nbd7 8.e3 b6 9.Ne2 c5, and 6...Ne4 7.Qc2 f5 8.Nh3 d6 9.f3 Nf6 10.e3 e5.

7.Bg5 An alternative line for White is 7.Nf3 Bb7 8.e3 d6 9.Be2 Nbd7 10.0-0.

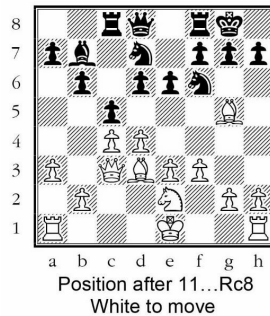
7...Bb7 Black can also play 7...c5 8.dxc5 bxc5 9.e3 d6

10.Bd3 Nbd7 11.Ne2 Rb8 or 7...Ba6 8.Qf3 Nc6 9.e3 Na5
10.Rc1 c5.

8.e3 White gains the bishop pair but falls behind in development after 8.f3 h6 9.Bh4 d5 10.e3 Nbd7 11.cxd5 Nxd5 12.Bxd8 Nxc3 13.Bh4 Nd5 14.Bf2.

8...d6 9.f3 White can also play 9.Ne2 Nbd7 10.Qc2 c5 11.Rd1 Qe7 12.Nc3.

9...Nbd7 10.Bd3 c5 11.Ne2 Rc8



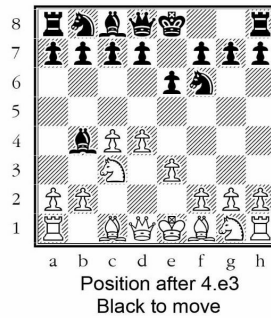
White plans to castle kingside and move the queen off the c-file to avoid the rook on c8.

Black plans to play ...d5 to challenge White's pawn center.

Rubinstein Variation

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 is the Rubinstein Variation named for Polish master Akiba Rubinstein who would have played a match for the World Championship in 1914 if not for the outbreak of the first World War.

Although it temporarily blocks the dark-squared bishop, White strengthens the center and plans to pursue kingside development before committing to a plan in the center and queenside.



4...0-0 Other variations Black can choose are 4...b6 5.Ne2 c5 6.a3 Ba5 7.Rb1 Na6 8.g3 Bb7 9.d5 b5 10.Bg2 bxc4 11.0-0 0-0 and 4...c5 5.Bd3 Nc6 6.Nf3 Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 d6 8.0-0 e5 9.Nd2 0-0.

5.Bd3 White can also play 5.Ne2 d5 6.a3 Be7 7.cxd5 exd5 8.g3 c6 9.Bg2 Bf5 10.0-0.

5...d5 6.Nf3 Other variations White can play are 6.a3 Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 dxc4 8.Bxc4 c5 9.Nf3 Qc7 10.Ba2 and 6.Nge2 c5 7.cxd5 cxd4 8.exd4 Nxd5 9.0-0 Nc6 10.Nxd5 exd5 11.Nf4 Bd6.

6...c5 Black can also play a fianchetto line with 6...b6 7.0-0 Bb7 8.cxd5 exd5 9.a3 Bd6 10.b4 a6 11.Qb3 Qe7.

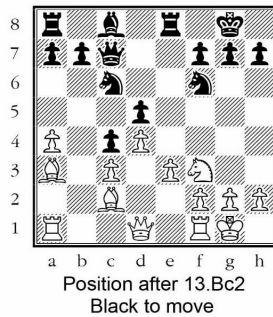
7.0-0 Nc6 Black can also choose between the pawn captures 7...dxc4 8.Bxc4 Nbd7 9.a3 Ba5 10.Qe2 a6 and 7...cxd4 8.exd4 dxc4 9.Bxc4 b6 10.Bg5 Bb7 11.Rc1 Nbd7.

8.a3 Bxc3 Black's bishop can retreat with 8...Ba5 9.h3 dxc4 10.Bxc4 h6 11.Qd3 cxd4 12.exd4 Bc7.

9.bxc3 Qc7 Another variation Black can play is 9...dxc4 10.Bxc4 Qc7 11.Bb2 e5 12.h3 Bf5.

10.cxd5 10.Bb2 and 10.h3 are also playable.

10...exd5 11.a4 Re8 12.Ba3 c4 13.Bc2



Both players are safely castled kingside.

White has a bishop pair in a position where the c- and d-files are locked up.

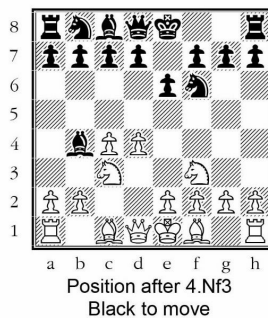
Black's light-squared bishop plans to develop to g4 to pin the knight to the queen.

Three Knights Variation

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Nf3 is the Three Knights Variation of the Nimzo-Indian Defense.

White develops the knight to the natural f3 square.

This position can also arise from the Bogo-Indian Defense after 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Bb4+ 4.Nc3.



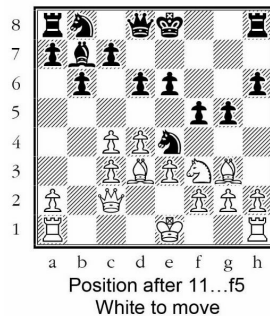
4...b6 4...c5 5.e3 transposes to the Rubinstein Variation and 4...d5 transposes to the Queen's Gambit Declined. Black can also play 4...0-0 5.Bg5 c5 6.Rc1 cxd4.

5.Bg5 Another variation for White is 5.Qb3 c5 6.Bg5 Bb7 7.a3 Ba5 8.0-0-0.

5...h6 Black can also fianchetto the bishop with 5...Bb7.

6.Bh4 g5 Another line for Black is 6...Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 d6.

7.Bg3 Ne4 8.Qc2 Bb7 9.e3 Bxc3+ 10.bxc3 d6 11.Bd3 f5



Black has a space advance on the kingside, a better pawn structure, and will probably develop the b8 knight to d7. It can then move to f6 to support the knight on e4.

Black's fianchettoed bishop supports the centralized knight on e4.

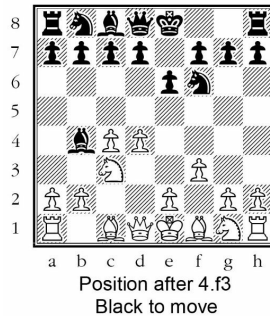
White has the bishop pair but the center is relatively closed.

Both players have the option of castling kingside or queenside.

Gheorghiu Variation

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.f3 is the Gheorghiu Variation named for Florin Gheorghiu who became Romania's first Grandmaster in 1965.

The pawn blocks the knight from developing to f3 but threatens 5.e4 to seize the center.



4...d5 5.a3 Bxc3+ Black can retreat the bishop with 5... Be7 6.e4 dxe4 7.fxe4 e5 8.d5 Bc5 or 5...Bd6 6.e4 c5 7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.cxd5 exd5 9.e5 Nfd7 10.Qxd5 0-0.

6.bxc3 c5 Other ideas are 6...0-0 7.cxd5 exd5 8.e3 c5 and 6...c6 7.e3 0-0 8.Bd3 b6.

7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.dxc5 opening the center for the bishop pair.

8...Qa5 attacking White's isolated pawns. Black can also play 8...f5 to prevent 9.e4.

9.e4 Nf6 Black can also retreat the knight to e7 or c7.

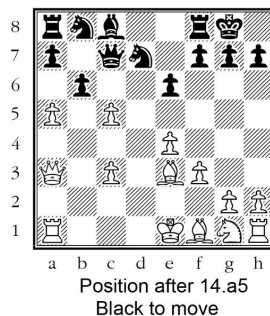
10.Be3 0-0 If 10...Qxc3+, White plans 11.Kf2.

11.Qb3 White can also play 11.Kf2 Nfd7 12.Rb1 Rd8 13.Qb3.

11...Nfd7 12.a4 clearing the a3 square for the queen.

12...Qc7 12...Nxc5 is met by 13.Qb4.

13.Qa3 b6 14.a5



White is temporarily ahead a pawn and has the bishop pair but hasn't developed the kingside pieces or castled.

Black has a lead in development and wants to quickly open the position before White can develop the kingside pieces and castle.

Black can fianchetto the bishop with 14...Bb7 or play 14... bxc5 15.Nh3 Ba6 16.Bxa6 Nxa6.

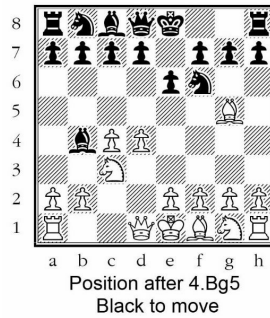
Leningrad Variation

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Bg5 is the Leningrad Variation named for Grandmaster Boris Spassky (World Champion from 1969-1972) and others from Leningrad who developed the theory for the variation.

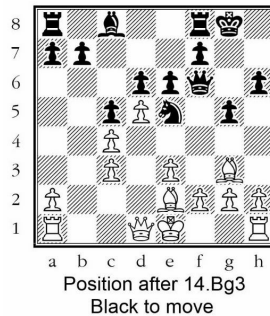
White develops the bishop and pins the Black knight to prevent it from moving to e4.

The pin can be annoying since Black's bishop often exchanges for the knight on c3 and thus cannot break the pin by interposing on e7.

White can also play the Sämisch Variation, 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 c5 6.e3 0-0 7.Bd3 Nc6 8.Ne2 with ideas of e4 and 0-0 or 4.g3 c5 5.Nf3 with idea of fianchettoing the light-squared bishop and castling kingside.



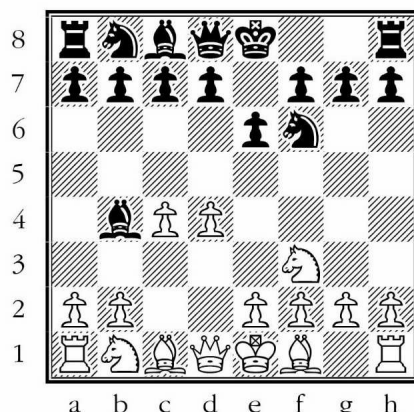
4...h6 5.Bh4 c5 Another idea for Black is 5...b6 6.f3 c5.
6.d5 d6 Black can also play 6...b5 7.dxe6 fxe6 8.cxb5 d5
 9.e3 0-0.
7.e3 Bxc3+ An alternative is 7...exd5 8.cxd5 Nbd7.
8.bxc3 Qe7 Black can close the center with 8...e5 9.Qc2
 Qe7 10.Nf3 Nbd7.
9.Nf3 White can also play 9.Bd3 Nbd7 10.dxe6 Qxe6
 11.Ne2 g5 12.Bg3 Ne5 13.h4.
9...Nbd7 Black can also close the center with 9...e5.
10.Nd2 0-0 11.Be2 Ne5 12.Ne4 g5 13.Nxf6+ Qxf6
14.Bg3



White has doubled c-pawns, plans on castling kingside, and would like to open the center for the bishop pair.

Black has a partially exposed king due to breaking the pin with ...g5 and needs to develop the queenside bishop and rook.

Bogo-Indian Defense



Position after 3...Bb4+
White to move

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Bb4+, the Bogo-Indian Defense, is named for Russian Grandmaster Yefim Bogolyubov who was defeated Alexander Alekhine in World Championship matches in 1929 and 1934.

Like in the Nimzo-Indian Defense, Black develops the kingside bishop quickly and prepares to castle.

The main replies for White are interposing with 4.Bd2 followed by 4...Qe7 or 4...a5 and 4.Nbd2.

4.Nc3 transposes to the Nimzo-Indian Defense.

Bogo-Indian Defense

1.d4 Nf6

2.c4 e6

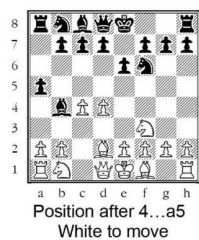
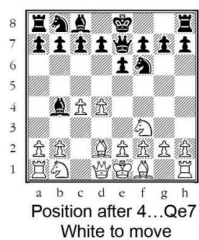
3.Nf3 Bb4+

4.Bd2

4.Nbd2

4...Qe7

4...a5



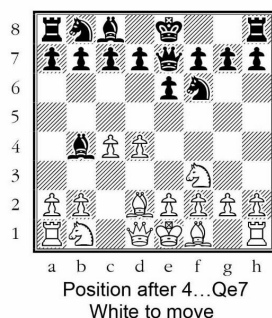
4.Bd2

After **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Bb4+**, **4.Bd2** forces Black to protect or move the bishop.

Black's main responses are **4...Qe7** and **4...a5**.

Black's other choices are **4...c5 5.Bxb4 cxb4 6.g3 0-0 7.Bg2 d6 8.0-0 a5 9.a3 Na6** and **4...Bxd2+ 5.Qxd2 d5 6.g3 Nbd7 7.Bg2 c6**.

4...Qe7



5.g3 Other variations for White are **5.Nc3 0-0 6.g3 d6 7.Bg2 Bxc3 8.Bxc3 Ne4 9.Qc2** and **5.a3 Bxd2+ 6.Qxd2 d6 7.Nc3**.

5...Nc6 An alternative for Black is **5...Bxd2+ 6.Qxd2 Nc6 7.Nc3 d5**.

6.Nc3 White can also play **6.Bg2 Bxd2+ 7.Nbxd2 d6 8.0-0 a5 9.e4 e5 10.d5 Nb8 11.Ne1**.

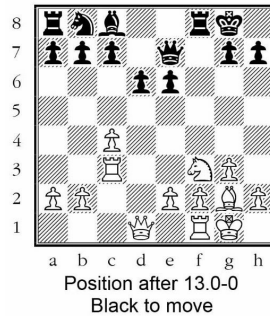
6...Bxc3 Black can complete development with **6...0-0 7.Bg2 Na5 8.b3 b6 9.0-0 Bb7 10.Qc2 Rac8**.

7.Bxc3 Ne4 8.Rc1 The endgame quickly approaches after **8.Qc2 Nxc3 9.Qxc3 Qb4 10.Qxb4 Nxb4 11.Kd2**.

8...0-0 9.Bg2 d6 10.d5 Nxc3 Black can also retreat the other knight with **10...Nd8**.

11.Rxc3 Nb8 11...Nd8 12.0-0 e5 is an alternative for Black.

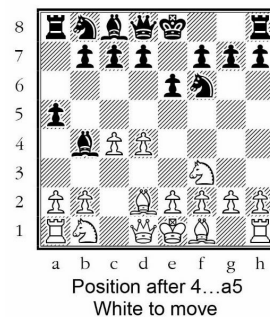
12.dxe6 fxe6 13.0-0



Black has an extra center pawn and a half-open f-file for the rook but needs to develop the queenside pieces.

White is castled and developed and can play Nd4, centralizing the knight and opening the long diagonal for the bishop.

4...a5



Black protects the bishop and slows down White's expansion plans on the queenside.

If White exchanges bishops on b4, Black's rook becomes active on the half-open a-file and the pawn on b4 prevents

White's knight from developing to c3.

White can either fianchetto the kingside bishop or develop it to d3 after playing e3.

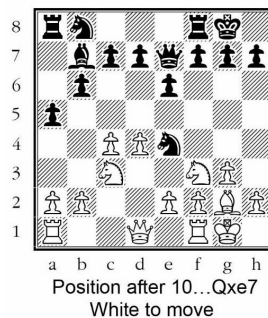
5.g3 Other possible variations are 5.e3 b6 6.Bd3 Bb7 7.0-0 0-0 8.Nc3 d6 9.Qe2, 5.Nc3 b6 6.Bg5 Bb7 7.e3 h6 8.Bh4, 5.a3 Bxd2+ 6.Qxd2 d6 7.Nc3, and 5.Qc2 d5 6.a3.

5...b6 Black can also play 5...d5 6.Qc2 0-0 or 5...d6 6.Bg2 Nbd7 7.0-0 e5 8.Nc3 0-0 9.Qc2 Re8.

6.Bg2 Bb7 7.0-0 0-0 8.Bg5 White can also develop with 8.Bf4 or 8.Nc3.

8...Be7 breaking the pin on the queen.

9.Nc3 Ne4 10.Bxe7 Qxe7



Both players castled and are preparing for the ensuing battle to take place in the center.

Tactics can occur on the h1-a8 diagonal where the light-squared bishops oppose each other.

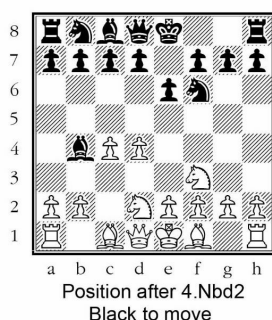
White can play Qc2 to develop the queen and connect the rooks. The rooks can then move toward the center to c1 and d1.

Black's b8 knight might develop to a6 or d7 after the d-pawn advances.

Black often plays ...f5 in these types of positions to protect the knight on e4.

4.Nbd2

After **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Bb4+**, **4.Nbd2** blocks the check and develops the knight.



If Black trades the bishop for the knight, White doesn't have doubled c-pawns like after 4.Nc3 and in some variations of the Nimzo-Indian Defense.

In some variations Black does not capture the knight and retreats the bishop after White plays a3.

Black would be moving the bishop twice, but White's knight on d2 blocks the bishop and is not aggressively placed to exert pressure on the center.

4...b6 Alternatives for Black that result in a variety of different positions are 4...0-0 5.a3 Be7 6.e4 d5 7.e5 Nfd7 8.b4 a5 9.b5 c5, 4...d5 5.Qa4+ Nc6 6.a3 Be7 7.e3 0-0 8.Qc2 Re8, 4...c5 5.a3 Bxd2+ 6.Bxd2 cxd4 7.Nxd4 d5, and 4...d6 5.a3 Bxd2+ 6.Qxd2 Nbd7 7.e3 e5.

5.a3 White can also play 5.g3 or 5.e3.

5...Bxd2+ 6.Qxd2 White can also recapture with 6.Bxd2

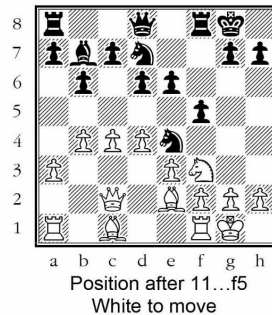
Bb7 7.Bg5 h6 8.Bh4 d6 9.e3.

6...Bb7 7.e3 White can also play 7.g3 and fianchetto the bishop.

7...0-0 8.Be2 An alternative for White is 8.Bd3.

8...d6 Another line is 8...a5 9.b3 d6 10.0-0 Nbd7.

9.0-0 Nbd7 10.b4 Ne4 11.Qc2 f5



Both players are safely castled kingside.

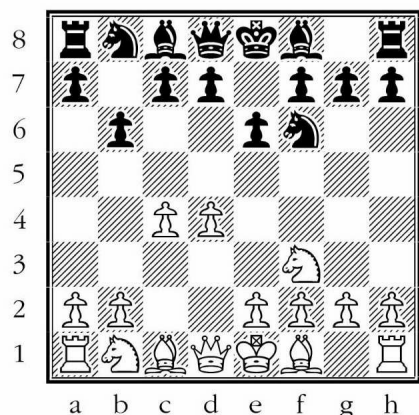
White has the bishop pair, but the dark-squared bishop is blocked by center pawns.

White plans to fianchetto the dark-squared bishop and advance pawns on the queenside.

Black has a centralized knight on e4 that can be reinforced by the other knight moving to f6.

Black can challenge White's space advantage in the center or queenside by playing ...c5, ...d5, or ...e5 at an appropriate time.

Queen's Indian Defense



Position after 3...b6
White to move

The Queen's Indian Defense begins **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6**.

Aron Nimzowitsch and other hypermodernists developed theory for the Queen's Indian Defense in the early 20th century.

Black postpones advancing center pawns and prepares to fianchetto the queenside bishop to increase control of the e4 and d5 squares.

White often controls more space in the center, but Black retains the bishop pair and doesn't have any pawn structure weaknesses.

White's most popular move, 4.g3, preparing to contest the long h1-a8 diagonal, is called the Fianchetto Variation.

The Petrosian Variation, 4.a3, prevents Black from playing ...Bb4 pinning the knight to the king after it develops to c3.

White can also develop the knight with 4.Nc3, called the Kasparov Variation.

Queen's Indian Defense

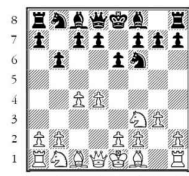
1.d4 Nf6

2.c4 e6

3.Nf3 b6

4.g3

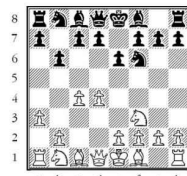
Fianchetto Variation



Position after 4.g3
Black to move

4.a3

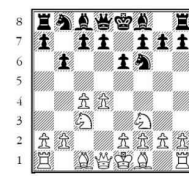
Petrosian Variation



Position after 4.a3
Black to move

4.Nc3

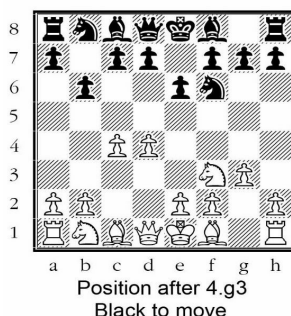
Kasparov Variation



Position after 4.Nc3
Black to move

Fianchetto Variation

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3, called the Fianchetto Variation, is a positional response that has long been the most popular variation in the Queen's Indian Defense.



White plans 5.Bg2 to challenge Black on the long h1-a8 diagonal.

4...Bb7 Another variation Black can play is 4...Ba6 5.b3 Bb4+ 6.Bd2 Be7 7. Bg2 c6 8.Bc3 d5 9.Ne5 Nfd7 10.Nxd7 Nxd7 11.Nd2 0-0 12.0-0 Rc8.

5.Bg2 Be7 Black can also play 5...Bb4+ 6.Bd2 Bxd2+ 7.Qxd2 0-0 8.Nc3 Ne4 9.Nxe4 Bxe4 or 5...c5 6.d5 exd5 7.Nh4 g6 8.Nc3 Bg7 9.0-0 0-0.

6.0-0 An alternative line is 6.Nc3 Ne4 7.Bd2 Bf6 8.0-0 0-0 9.Rc1 c5 10.d5 exd5 11.cxd5 Nxd2 12.Nxd2.

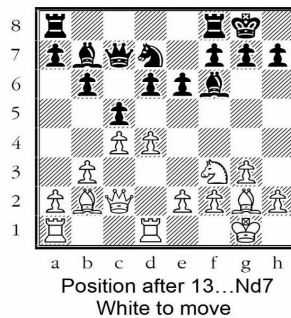
6...0-0 7.Nc3 White can also play 7.Re1 Na6 8.Ne5 Bxg2 9.Kxg2 c5 10.d5 or 7.d5 exd5 8.Nh4 c6 9.cxd5 Nxd5 10.Nf5.

7...Ne4 8.Qc2 White can consider 8.Bd2 f5 9.Qc2 Bf6 10.Rad1 or 8.Nxe4 Bxe4 9.Ne1 Bxg2 10.Nxg2.

8...Nxc3 9.Qxc3 c5 Another line for Black is 9...f5 10.b3 Bf6 11.Bb2 d6 12.Qd2 Nd7.

10.Rd1 d6 11.b3 Bf6 12.Bb2 Qc7 13.Qc2 moving off the diagonal of Black's dark-squared bishop.

13...Nd7

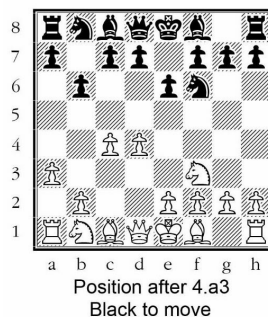


Both players are safely castled kingside and the bishops oppose each other on both long diagonals.

A possible continuation is 14.e4 Rac8 15.Qe2 Rfd8.

Petrosian Variation

The Petrosian Variation, named for Russian World Champion (1963-69) Tigran Petrosian, is **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.a3**.



White prevents ...Bb4 and plans Nc3 and e4 with the goal of occupying the center with pawns.

Black usually plays ...Bb7 and ...d5 to contest the e4 square.

4...Bb7 Black can also play 4...Ba6 5.Qc2 Bb7 6.Nc3 c5 7.e4 cxd4 8.Nxd4 Bc5 9.Nb3 Nc6 10.Bg5 h6 11.Bh4 Nd4 12.Nxd4 Bxd4 or 4...c5 5.d5 Ba6 6.Qc2 exd5 7.cxd5 g6 8.Nc3 Bg7 9.g3 0-0 10.Bg2 d6.

5.Nc3 d5 6.cxd5 Another line for White is 6.Bg5 Be7 7.Qa4+ c6 8.Bxf6 Bxf6 9.cxd5 exd5 10.g3 0-0 11.Bg2.

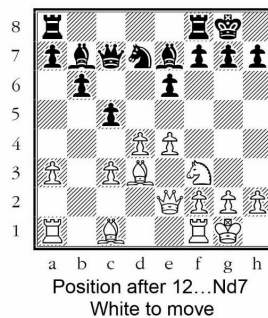
6...Nxd5 Black can also play 6...exd5 7.g3 Be7 8.Bg2 0-0.

7.Qc2 White can also choose between 7.e3 g6 (7...Be7 is also playable) 8.Bb5+ c6 9.Bd3 Bg7 10.0-0 0-0 11.Na4 Nd7 12.e4 and 7.Bd2 Be7 8.Qc2 0-0 9.e4 Nxc3 10.Bxc3 c5 11.dxc5 bxc5 12.Rd1.

7...Nxc3 An alternative for Black is 7...Be7 8.e4 Nxc3 9.bxc3 0-0 10.Bd3 c5 11.0-0 Qc7 12.Qe2 Nd7.

8.bxc3 White can also recapture with 8.Qxc3 h6 9.b4 Be7 10.Bf4.

8...Be7 9.e4 0-0 10.Bd3 c5 11.0-0 Qc7 12.Qe2 Nd7



Both players are safely castled with the battle likely taking place in the center.

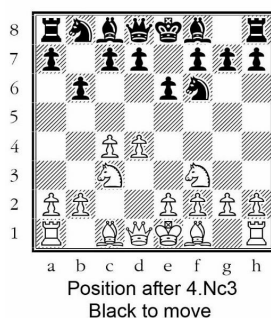
White's dark-squared bishop can develop to b2 to support the d4 pawn and then the rooks can move toward the center files.

Black can play ...cxd4 and move the rooks to the c- and d-files to complete development.

Kasparov Variation

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.Nc3 is called the Kasparov Variation named for Garry Kasparov, the Russian World Champion from 1985-2000.

Other lines White can choose besides the previously shown variations are **4.e3 Bb7 5.Bd3 d5 6.0-0 Bd6 7.b3 0-0 8.Bb2** or **4.Bf4 Bb7 5.e3 Be7 6.h3 c5 7.Nc3 cxd4 8.Nxd4**.



4...Bb7 4...Bb4 transposes into the Three Knights Variation of the Nimzo-Indian Defense.

5.Bg5 5.a3 transposes into the Petrosian Variation of the Queen's Indian Defense.

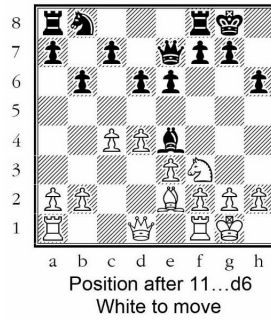
5...h6 Black can also play **5...Be7 6.Qc2 c5 7.dxc5 bxc5 8.e3 0-0** or **5...Bb4 6.e3 h6 7.Bh4 g5 8.Bg3 Ne4**.

6.Bh4 Be7 6...Bb4 and 6...g5 **7.Bg3 Nh5 8.e3 Nxc3 9.fxc3 Bg7** are also playable.

7.e3 Another line for White is **7.Qc2 c5 8.dxc5 bxc5 9.e3 0-0 10.Be2**.

7...Ne4 8.Bxe7 White can also play **8.Nxe4 Bxe4 9.Bg3**.

8...Qxe7 9.Nxe4 Bxe4 10.Be2 0-0 11.0-0 d6



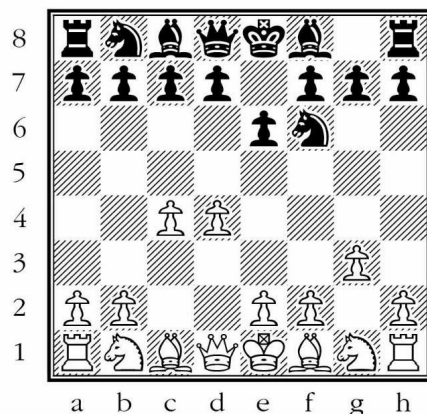
Both players are safely castled on the kingside.

Black needs to develop the queenside knight and rook and consider challenging White's pawn center with either ...c5 or ...e5.

Black has the more active bishop, but White can neutralize it on the h1-a8 diagonal with 12.Nd2 Bb7 13.Bf3.

White also plans to move the queen from the back rank to connect the rooks so they can move toward the center files.

Catalan Opening



Position after 3.g3

Black to move

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 is called the Catalan Opening after tournament organizers of the 1929 Barcelona tournament on the coast of northeastern Spain asked Savielly Tartakower to create a variation to be named for that region of Catalonia.

Positions from the Catalan Opening can also arise in the Queen's Gambit, Slav Defense, Queen's Indian Defense, English Opening, and Réti Opening.

The significant feature of the opening is the fianchetto development of White's kingside bishop which attacks the e4 and d5 center squares and hinders the development of Black's queenside pieces.

After 3...d5 4.Bg2, Black can play the tactical 5...dxc4, called the Open Variation, and either try to hold onto the extra pawn or give it back to gain extra time to develop.

In the Closed Variation Black does not capture on c4 and chooses to develop with 5...Be7.

The Catalan Opening can also occur with the move order 3.Nf3 and 4.g3.

Catalan Opening

1.d4	Nf6
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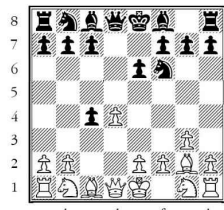
2.c4	e6
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3.g3	d5
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4.Bg2

4...dxc4

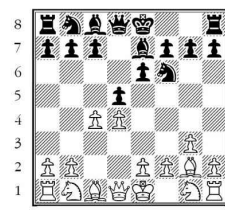
Open Variation



Position after 4...dxc4
White to move

4...Be7

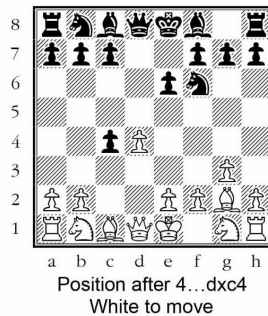
Closed Variation



Position after 4...Be7
White to move

Open Variation

The Open Variation of the Catalan Opening is **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 dxc4**.



Black captures the pawn instead of developing a piece. White's fianchettoed bishop is powerful on the h1-a8 diagonal with Black's pawn removed from d5.

White often recovers the pawn with Qc2 (with the idea of playing a4 if Black protects the pawn with ...b5), Nf3-e5, or Qa4+.

5.Nf3 White can also play 5.Qa4+ Nbd7 (or 5...Bd7 6.Qxc4 Bc6) 6.Qxc4 a6 7.Qc2 c5 8.Nf3 cxd4 9.Nxd4 Bc5 10.Nb3 Bd6 11.0-0 0-0 12.Nc3.

5...Be7 Other variations Black can choose are 5...c5 6.0-0 Nc6 7.dxc5 Qxd1 8.Rxd1 Bxc5, 5...Nc6 6.Qa4 Bb4+ 7.Bd2 Nd5 8.Bxb4 Ndx b4 9.0-0 Rb8, 5...a6 6.0-0 Nc6 7.Nc3 Rb8 8.e4 Be7 9.Qe2 b5, 5...Bb4+ 6.Bd2 a5 7.0-0 0-0 8.Bg5 Nc6, or 5...Bd7 6.Ne5 Bc6 7.Nxc6 Nxc6 8.0-0 Qd7 9.e3 0-0.

6.0-0 0-0 7.Qc2 a6 An alternative for Black is 7...c5 8.Qxc4 cxd4 9.Nxd4 e5.

8.a4 White can also capture the pawn with 8.Qxc4 b5 9.Qc2 Bb7 10.Bf4 Nd5 11.Nc3 Nxf4 12.gxf4 Nc6 13.Rfd1.

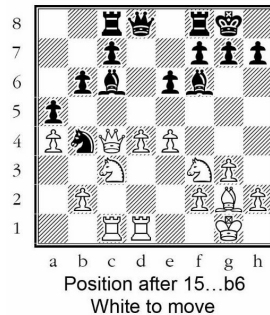
8...Bd7 8...Nc6, 8...c5, and 8...Nbd7 are also playable.

9.Qxc4 White can also play 9.Rd1 Bc6 10.Nc3.

9...Bc6 10.Bg5 a5 An alternative for Black is 10...Bd5 11.Qd3 c5.

11.Nc3 Na6 Black can also develop the rook with 11...Ra6 12.e3 Rb6.

12.Rac1 Nb4 13.Rfd1 Rc8 14.Bxf6 Bxf6 15.e4 b6



Both players are safely castled and all the pieces are developed.

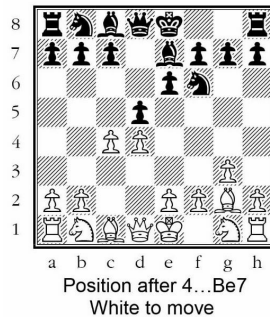
White's d- and e-pawns control center squares.

Black has a bishop pair and a knight outpost on b4.

A possible continuation is 16.d5 exd5 17.exd5 Bb7 18.Nd4 Ba6 19.Ncb5 Bxd4 20.Rxd4.

Closed Variation

The Closed Variation of the Catalan Opening is **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 Be7**.



Black defers capturing on c4 and sometimes avoids it altogether.

Black plans to expand on the queenside with ...c5 and possibly ...b5.

5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 Nbd7 Black can also play 6...c6 7.Qc2 b6 8.Nbd2 Bb7 9.e4 Na6, 6...b6 7.cxd5 exd5 8.Nc3 Bb7, or 6...c5.

7.Qc2 An alternative for White is 7.b3 c6 8.Bb2 b6 9.Nc3 a5 10.Nd2 Ba6 11.e4.

7...c6 8.Nbd2 Another variation for White is 8.Rd1 b6 9.Bf4 Bb7 10.Nc3 Rc8 11.Ne5.

8...b6 Black can also play 8...b5 9.c5 a5 10.e4 Nxe4 11.Nxe4 dxe4 12.Qxe4 Nf6.

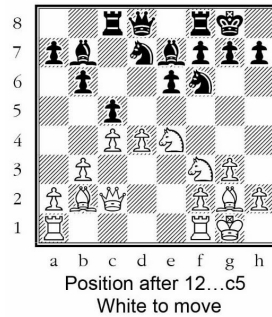
9.e4 Bb7 Alternatives for Black are 9...dxe4 and 9...Ba6.

10.b3 Other possible moves for White are 10.e5, 10.Rd1, 10.exd5, 10.Ng5, and 10.Ne5.

10...Rc8 Black can also play 10...b5 or 10...dxe4 11.Nxe4 c5.

11.Bb2 dxe4 11...Qc7 is also playable.

12.Nxe4 c5



Both players are safely castled with the battle to take place in the center.

A pair of knights are likely to trade soon.

White's connected rooks are heading for d1 and e1.

A possible continuation is 13.Nxf6 Bxf6 14.Ng5 Bxg5
15.Bxb7 Rc7 16.Bg2.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5

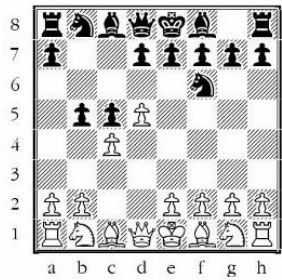
1.d4	Nf6
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2.c4	c5
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3.d5

3...b5

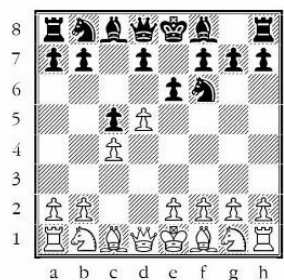
Benko Gambit



Position after 3...b5
White to move

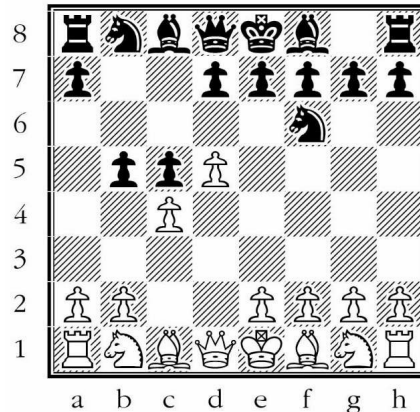
3...e6

Benoni Defense



Position after 3...e6
White to move

Benko Gambit



In the Benko Gambit, **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5**, Black offers the b-pawn in order to open lines and create active piece play on the queenside.

It is named for Hungarian-American Grandmaster Pal Benko who promoted the gambit in the late 1960s and 1970s.

If White accepts the gambit with 4.cxb5, Black can play 4...a6 allowing the b5 pawn to capture a second pawn. With the b5 and a6 pawns removed, Black will have half-open a- and b-files for the rooks and plans to fianchetto the dark-squared bishop to put pressure on White's queenside.

White is not forced to accept the gambit and has a number of ways to decline the pawn.

Benko Gambit

1.d4 Nf6

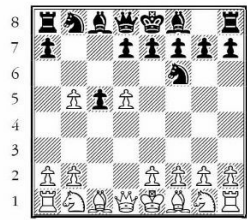
2.c4 c5

3.d5

3...b5

4.cxb5

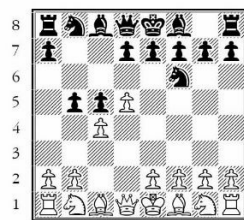
Accepted Variations



Position after 4.cxb5
Black to move

3...b5

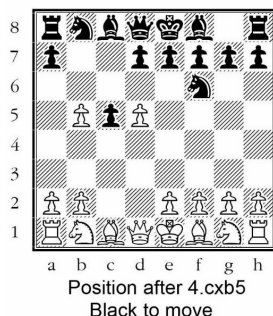
Declined Variations



Position after 3...b5
White to move

Accepted Variations

After **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5**, White can accept the gambit pawn by playing **4.cxb5**.



White can capture a second pawn after **4...a6** with **5.bxa6**.

5...g6 6.Nc3 Bxa6 7.g3 Variations where White allows Black to capture the bishop on f1 are **7.e4 Bxf1 8.Kxf1 d6 9.Nf3 Bg7 10.g3 0-0 11.Kg2** and **7.Nf3 d6 8.Nd2 Bg7 9.e4 Bxf1 10.Nxf1 0-0 11.Ne3 Nbd7 12.0-0**.

7...d6 8.Bg2 Bg7 9.Nf3 White can play **9.Nh3** with the idea of moving the knight to f4.

9...Nbd7 Black can also castle kingside.

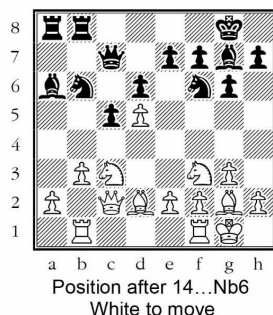
10.Rb1 White can prepare to move the pawn to e4 with **10.0-0 Nb6 11.Re1**.

10...0-0 Another idea for Black is **10...Nb6 11.b3 Bc8 (11...Bb7 12.Nh4 0-0 13.0-0 Ne8) 12.Nh4 h6 13.Qc2 Qd7 14.Bb2 g5**.

11.0-0 Qa5 Another option for Black is **11...Ne8**.

12.Bd2 Rfb8 12...Bb7 is also playable.

13.Qc2 Qc7 14.b3 Nb6



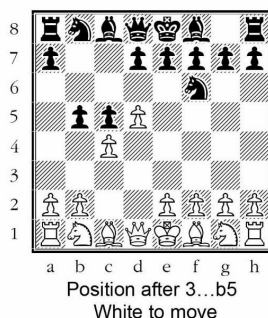
White needs to defend the d5 pawn a second time.

White is ahead by the gambit pawn and would like to trade pieces with hope of reaching the ending with an extra outside passed a-pawn.

Black has pressure on the half-open a- and b-files and the a1-h8 diagonal.

Declined Variations

White does not have to capture the gambit pawn after 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5.



White has several ways to decline the pawn sacrifice:
 4.Nf3 Bb7 (4...bxc4 5.Nc3 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Bxc4, 4...b4 5.a3 g6 6.axb4, and 4...e6 5.Bg5 exd5 6.cxd5 are options for Black.) 5.a4 Qa5+ 6.Bd2 b4 7.Qc2 g6 8.e4,

4.Qc2 bxc4 5.e4 g6 6.Nf3 Bg7 7.Bxc4,
 4.Nd2 bxc4 5.e4 c3 6.bxc3 g6 7.Ngf3, and
 4.a4 b4 5.Nd2 g6 6.e4 d6 7.Ngf3 Bg7 8.g3.

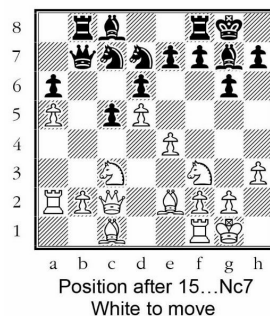
4.cxb5 a6 5.b6 is called the Pawn Return Variation.
 Other options for White are 5.e3 g6 6.Nc3 Bg7 7.Nf3 0-0
 8.a4, 5.f3 e6 6.e4 exd5 7.e5 Qe7 8.Qe2 Ng8 9.Nc3 Bb7
 10.Nh3 c4 11.Nf4, and 5.Nc3 axb5 6.e4 b4 7.Nb5 d6 8.Bf4.

5...d6 Black can also play 5...e6 6.Nc3 Nxd5 7.Nxd5
 exd5 8.Qxd5 Nc6 9.Nf3 Rb8 or 5...Qxb6 6.Nc3 d6 7.e4 g6
 8.Nf3 Bg7.

6.Nc3 g6 Another line for Black is 6...Nbd7 7.e4 g6
 8.Nf3 Bg7 9.Be2 0-0.

7.Nf3 Bg7 8.e4 0-0 9.a4 threatening 10.a5 to protect the
 b6 pawn. Another variation is 9.Be2 Nbd7 10.a4 a5 11.0-0
 Nxb6 12.Bf4.

**9...Qxb6 10.a5 Qc7 11.Be2 Nbd7 12.0-0 Rb8 13.h3
 Ne8 14.Qc2 Qb7 15.Ra2** to overprotect the b2 pawn and
 move off the a1-h8 diagonal away from the g7 bishop.
15...Nc7



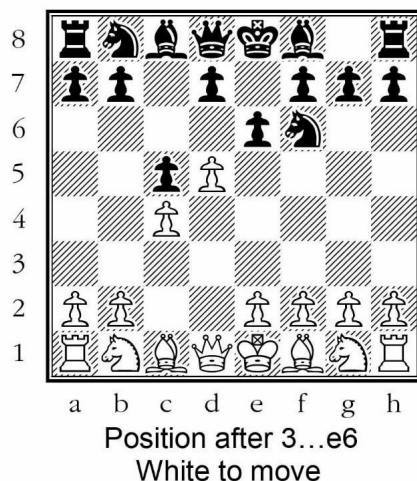
Both players are safely castled kingside.

Black has pressure on the half-open b-file.

White has more space in the center.

Future battles may take place on the b5 and e5 squares.

Benoni Defense



The Benoni Defense (sometimes called the Modern Benoni), **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6**, was popularized by the 8th World Champion Mikhail Tal in the 1950s and 1960s.

Black allows White to control the center by pushing the pawn to d5 and after Black exchanges pawns on d5, White obtains a pawn majority on the kingside.

In return, Black gets a queenside pawn majority that can become dangerous when the pawns advance. Black plans to fianchetto the dark-squared bishop and has play on the half-open e-file.

The Main Line of the Benoni is 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6.

White usually then chooses between 6.e4 and 6.Nf3.

Benoni Defense

1.d4	Nf6
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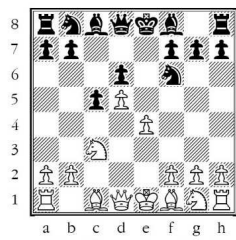
2.c4	c5
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3.d5	e6
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4.Nc3	exd5
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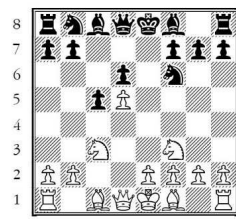
5.cxd5	d6
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6.e4



Position after 6.e4
Black to move

6.Nf3



Position after 6.Nf3
Black to move

Main Line

The Benoni Defense begins **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5**.

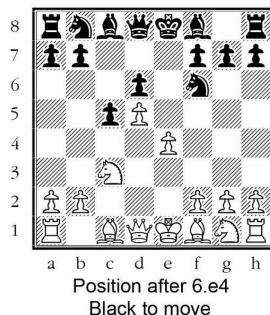
White can transpose to the Symmetrical Variation of the English Opening by playing 3.Nf3.

3...e6 Black can also play 3...d6 or the Czech Benoni, 3...e5 4.Nc3 d6.

4.Nc3 4.Nf3 b5 is the Blumenfeld Gambit which can be reached by several different move orders.

4...exd5 5.cxd5 d6 Black can also consider 5...Bd6 6.Nf3 0-0 7.Bg5 Re8.

White's main choice is between 6.e4 and 6.Nf3.



6.e4

6...g6 7.f4 is the Pawn Storm Variation. Other sample variations for White are 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.h3 0-0 9.Bd3 b5 10.Bxb5 Nxe4 11.Nxe4 Qa5+ 12.Nfd2 Qxb5 13.Nxd6 Qa6 14.N2c4 Nd7 15.0-0, 7.Bd3 Bg7 8.Nge2 0-0 9.0-0 a6 10.a4, and 7.f3 Bg7 8.Bg5 0-0 9.Qd2 a6 10.a4.

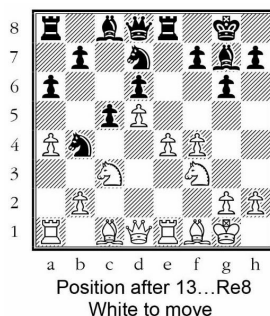
7...Bg7 8.Bb5+ White can also play 8.Nf3 0-0 9.Be2 Bg4 10.0-0 Nbd7 11.h3 Bxf3 12.Bxf3.

8...Nfd7 9.a4 Other options for White are 9.Nf3 a6 10.Bd3 b5 11.0-0 0-0 12.Kh1 Nb6 13.f5, 9.Be2 0-0 10.Nf3 Na6 11.0-0, and 9.Bd3 0-0 10.Nf3 followed by castling.

9...0-0 Another line for Black is 9...Qh4+ 10.g3 Qe7

11.Nf3 0-0 12.0-0 Na6 13.Re1 Nb4.

10.Nf3 Na6 11.0-0 Nb4 12.Re1 a6 13.Bf1 Re8 Black can also play 13...Nf6.

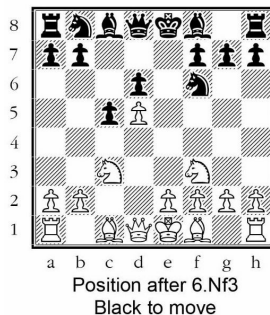


White has more pawns in the center and may consider playing 14.h3 followed by expanding on the kingside.

Black still needs to develop the queenside bishop and rook but has a strong fianchettoed bishop on the open a1-h8 diagonal and an outposted knight on b4.

6.Nf3

After **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6**, White can play **6.Nf3** developing the knight to the natural f3 square and delaying the movement of the e-pawn.



Black plans to fianchetto the dark-squared bishop and castle kingside.

6...g6 7.Nd2 is called the Knight's Tour Variation. Other variations available to White are **7.Bf4 Bg7 8.Qa4+ Bd7 9.Qb3 Qc7 10.e4 0-0 11.Nd2 Nh5 12.Be3, 7.g3 Bg7 8.Bg2 0-0 9.0-0 Re8 10.Nd2 a6 11.a4 Nbd7 12.h3 Rb8 13.Nc4, 7.h3 Bg7 8.e4 0-0 9.Bd3, 7.Bg5 Bg7 8.Nd2 h6 9.Bh4, and 7.Qa4+ Bd7 8.Qb3.**

7...Bg7 Another variation is **7...Nbd7 8.e4 Bg7 9.Be2 0-0 10.0-0 Re8 11.a4 Ne5.**

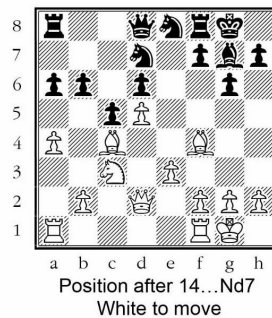
8.Nc4 White can also play **8.e4 0-0 9.Be2 Re8 10.0-0.**

8...0-0 9.Bf4 Another variation is **9.Bg5 h6 10.Bh4 Qd7 11.Bg3 b5 12.Nxd6 b4 13.Na4.**

9...Ne8 Black can also play **9...Nh5, 9...b6, or 9...Na6.**

10.Qd2 b6 10...f5 is also playable.

11.a4 Ba6 12.e3 Bxc4 13.Bxc4 a6 14.0-0 Nd7



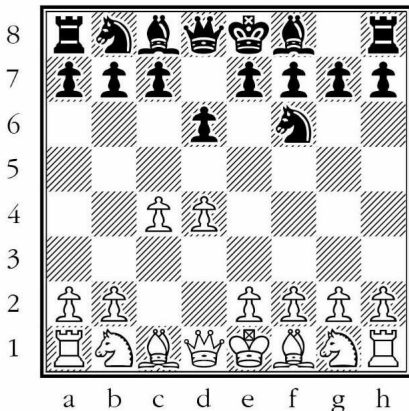
Both players are safely castled kingside.

White has the bishop pair.

A plan for White is to develop the rooks to b1 and c1 and advance the pawn to b4.

Black can play in the center with ...f5 and ...Ne5.

Old Indian Defense



Position after 2...d6
White to move

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 d6 is called the Old Indian Defense.

The Old Indian differs from the King's Indian Defense in that Black chooses to develop the dark-squared bishop to the less active e7 square as opposed to fianchettoing it to g7.

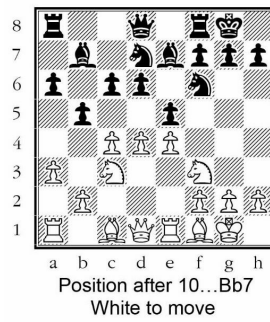
3.Nc3 If White plays 3.Nf3, Black can play 3...g6, 3...Nbd7, 3...Bg4, 3...c6, or 3...Bf5.

3...Nbd7 4.e4 e5 5.Nf3 Be7 Black can transpose into a King's Indian Defense by playing 5...g6 6.Be2 Bg7 7.0-0 0-0.

6.Be2 0-0 7.0-0 c6 8.Re1 Alternatives for White are 8.Qc2 a6 9.Rd1 and 8.d5.

8...a6 9.Bf1 White can expand on the queenside with 9.Rb1 b5 10.b4 Bb7 11.Bf1 Re8 12.a4.

9...b5 10.a3 Bb7

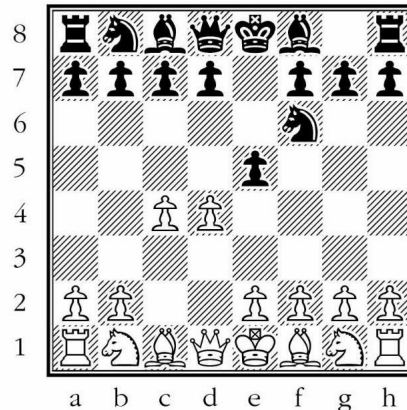


The battle will take place on the queenside and in the center.

White can play 11.Bg5 and develop the rook to c1.

Black connects the rooks after developing the queen to a square on the a5-d8 diagonal.

Budapest Gambit



Position after 2...e5
White to move

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 is the Budapest Gambit named for the Hungarian capital city where the first known game was played in 1896 and first tournament debut occurred in 1916.

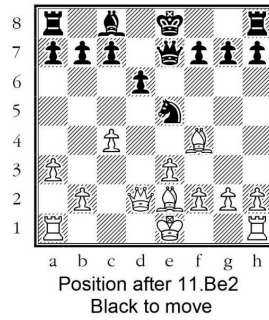
Although White usually doesn't hold onto the pawn, Black's knight is forced to make multiple moves before the other minor pieces enter the game.

3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 White can also play 4.Nf3 Bc5 5.e3 Nc6 6.Be2 0-0 7.0-0 Re8 8.Nc3 Ngxe5 9.Nxe5 Nxe5, 4.e4 Nxe5 5.f4 Nec6 6.Be3, or 4.e3 Nxe5 5.Nh3 with the idea of 6.Nf4.

4...Nc6 An aggressive variation Black can play is 4...g5 5.Bg3 Bg7 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Nc3 Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.e3 d6 10.h4 g4.

5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 An alternative line for White is 6.Nc3 Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 Qe7 8.Qd5 f6 9.exf6 Nxf6 10.Qd3.

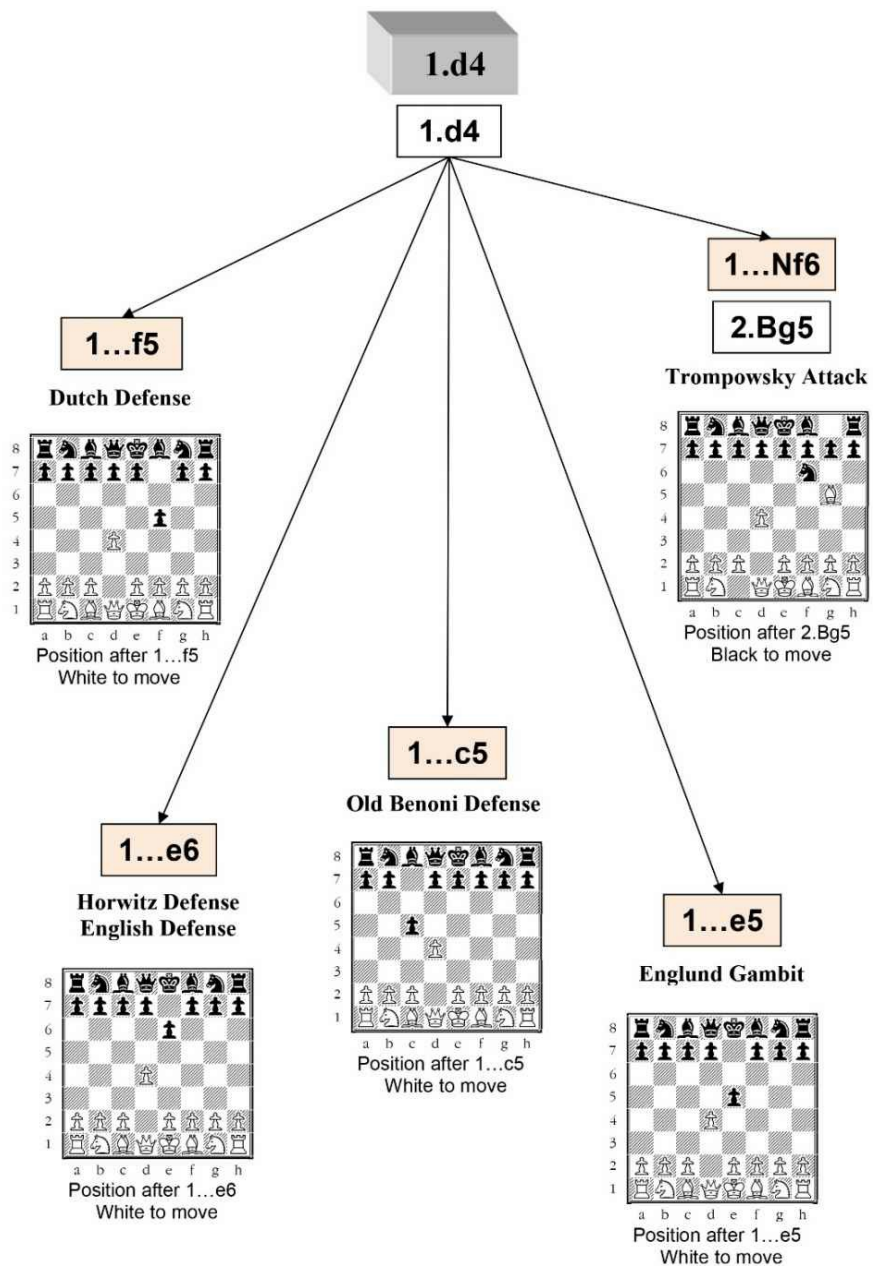
6...Qe7 7.a3 Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.e3 Bxd2+ 10.Qxd2 d6 11.Be2



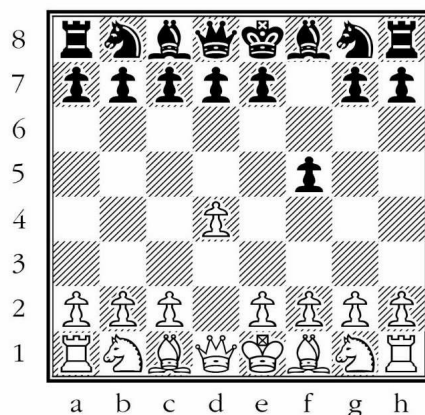
White has the bishop pair.

Both players plan to castle kingside.

Black can play ...a5 to slow down White's potential expansion on the queenside.



Dutch Defense



The Dutch Defense, **1.d4 f5**, was first recommended by Dutch master Elias Stein in 1789 and gained popularity during the hypermodern movement in the 1920s.

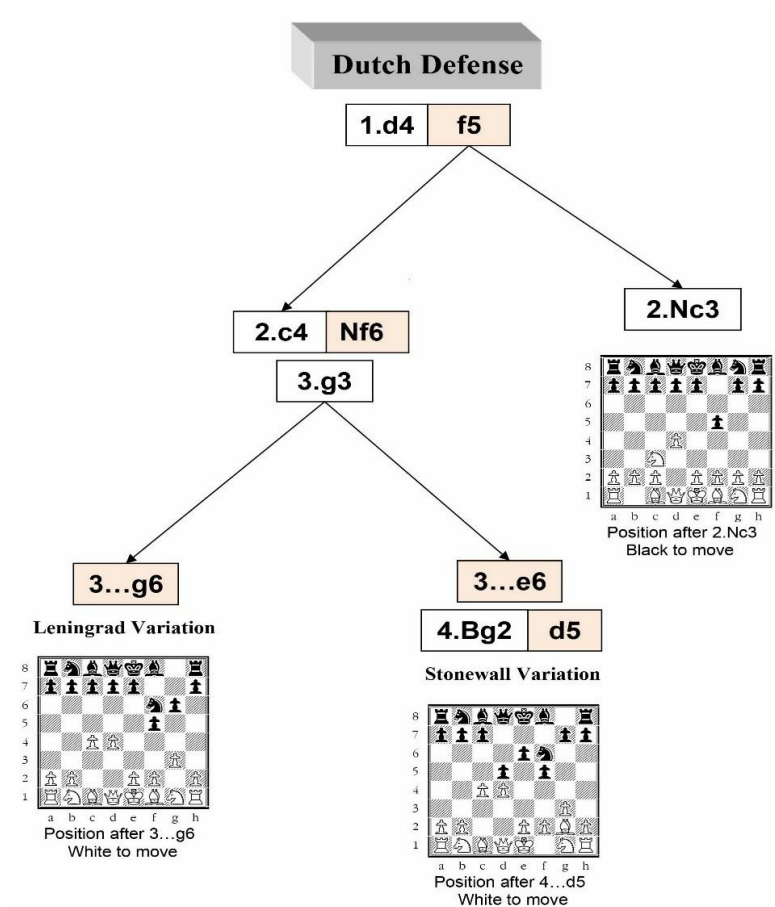
By playing 1...f5, Black immediately attacks the center e4 square and stakes out space on the kingside. The downside to 1...f5 is that it weakens the light squares near Black's king.

White usually plays 2.c4 to gain space on the queenside, fianchettoes the kingside bishop, and castles kingside.

The Leningrad Variation, 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 g6, is where Black fianchettoes the dark-squared bishop, castles kingside, and keeps options open in the center by not committing those pawns early on.

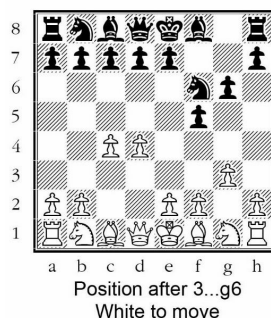
The Stonewall Variation, 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 d5, is where Black sets up a pawn wall on f5, e6, d5, and c6. This pawn structure prevents White from moving into Black territory but blocks the light-squared bishop and creates a hole on e5.

White can avoid the Leningrad and Stonewall Variations by playing 2.Nc3 or other second move alternatives.



Leningrad Variation

The Leningrad Dutch, which gained popularity in Leningrad during the 1930s, is where Black plans to fianchetto the dark-squared bishop after **1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 g6**.



Black plans to castle kingside and play ...d6 to support an eventual ...e5 pawn push in the center.

The Leningrad offers varying strategic situations that rarely lead to symmetrical, potentially drawish pawn structures.

4.Bg2 Bg7 Black often plays 4...d6 before fianchettoing.

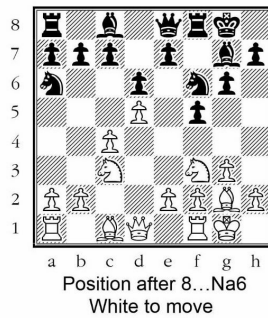
5.Nf3 White can also play 5.Nc3 or 5.Nh3 with the idea of moving the knight to f4.

5...0-0 6.0-0 6.Nc3 d6 7.0-0 transposes to the text below.

6...d6 7.Nc3 7.b3 followed by fianchettoing the queenside bishop is another idea.

7...Qe8 threatening 8...e5. Other options for Black are 7...c6 8.d5 e5 9.dxe6 Bxe6 10.b3 Na6 11.Bb2 Qe7 and 7...Nc6 8.d5 Ne5 9.Nxe5 dxe5.

8.d5 Na6 Black can also play 8...a5 to slow down or prevent b4. The game could then continue 9.Nd4 Na6 10.b3 (or 10.e4 fxe4 11.Nxe4 Nxe4 12.Bxe4 Bh3 13.Re1 Nc5).



Both players are safely castled kingside.

White can expand on the queenside and eyes the hole on e6.

White often fianchettoes the dark-squared bishop.

Black plans to develop the light-squared bishop to d7 and challenge White in the center with ...e5, ...c6, or ...c5.

A possible continuation is 9.Rb1 Bd7 10.b4 c5 11.dxc6 bxc6.

Stonewall Variation

In the Stonewall Dutch, which often starts with the moves **1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 d5**, Black plans to set up a wall of pawns on f5, e6, d5, and c6 to prevent White's pieces from moving into Black's side of the board.

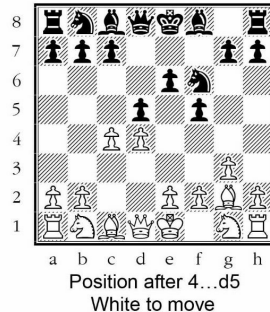
Black can play on either wing, confident that White will not be able to take control of the center.

Along with the hole on e5, Black's biggest challenge is developing the light-squared bishop.

Black can develop the bishop with ...Bd7-e8-h5 or play ...b6, ...Bb7, and an eventual ...c5.

Black can also play 4...Be7, the Ilyin-Zhenevsky Variation. A sample continuation is 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 d6

(Classical Dutch) 7.b3 Qe8 8.Nbd2 Nc6 9.Bb2 Bd8 10.Qc2 e5.



5.Nf3 Another variation is 5.Nh3 Be7 6.b3 0-0 7.0-0 c6 8.Bb2 Ne4 9.Nd2 Bf6 10.Nxe4 dxe4 11.Qc2 Qe7.

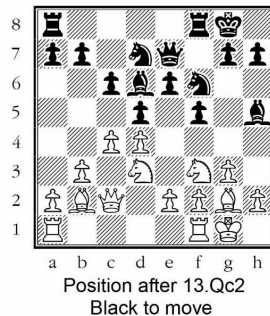
5...c6 6.0-0 Bd6 7.b3 Other moves for White are 7.Nbd2, 7.Nc3, 7.Qc2, and 7.Bf4.

7...Qe7 with the idea of preventing 8.Ba3 to trade the dark-squared bishops.

8.Bb2 White can also play 8.a4 with the same idea of 9.Ba3 as in the note above.

8...0-0 9.Nbd2 Bd7 Black can fianchetto the light-squared bishop with 9...b6 10.Ne5 Bb7 11.Ndf3 Nbd7 12.Rc1 Rac8.

10.Ne5 Be8 11.Ndf3 Bh5 12.Nd3 Nbd7 13.Qc2



Both players are safely castled and need to develop the queenside rooks.

White plans to move the f3 knight to e5 and develop the rooks to c1 and e1.

Control of the e4 and e5 squares will be important in the ensuing battle.

2.Nc3

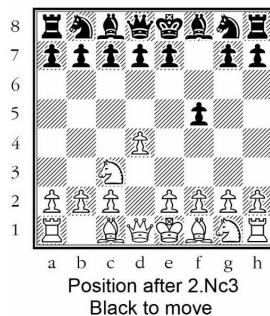
After **1.d4 f5**, White can avoid the main lines of the Dutch Defense with **2.Nc3**, supporting an early e4 pawn push in the center.

2.Nf3 usually transposes into the Leningrad or Stonewall Variations.

The Hopton Attack is 1.d4 f5 2.Bg5 g6 (2...Nf6 3.Bxf6 exf6) 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.h4 (4.e4 fxe4 5.Nxe4 d5) 4...h6 5.Bf4 Nf6 6.e3 d6 7.Qf3.

The Staunton Gambit is 1.d4 f5 2.e4 fxe4 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 (4.f3 d5 5.Bg5 Bf5 6.fxe4 dxe4 7.Bc4) 4...Nc6 5.d5 Ne5 6.Qe2 Nf7 7.Bxf6 (7.h4 c6 8.0-0-0) 7...exf6 8.Nxe4 Qe7 9.d6.

Another second move alternative for White is 2.Bf4.



2...d5 preventing 3.e4. Black can also play 2...Nf6

3.Bg5 d5 4.Bxf6 exf6 5.e3 Be6 6.Bd3 Nc6 7.Nge2 Qd7.

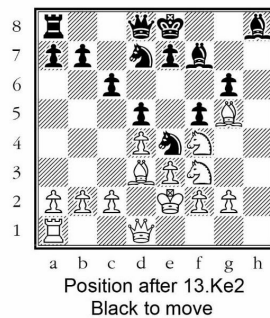
3.Bg5 An alternative line for White is 3.Bf4 Nf6 4.e3 e6 5.Nf3.

3...g6 Black can also play 3...c6 4.e3 Qb6 or 3...Nf6 4.Bxf6 exf6 5.e3 c6.

4.h4 White can also play 4.e3 with the idea of 5.Qf3.

4...Bg7 5.e3 c6 6.Bd3 Be6 7.Nf3 7.Qf3 is also playable.

7...Nd7 8.h5 Ngf6 9.hxg6 hxg6 10.Rxh8+ Bxh8 11.Ne2 Bf7 12.Nf4 Ne4 13.Ke2

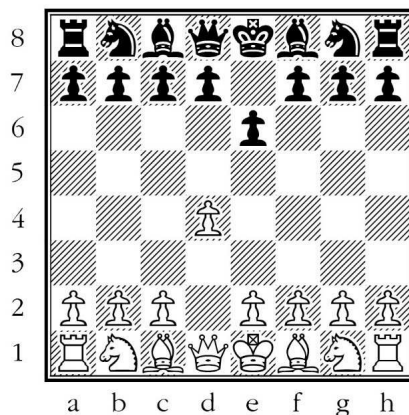


White's king is safe in the center.

White intends to activate the queen by moving her to the open h-file with 14.Qh1.

Play might continue 13...Bf6 14.Bxf6 exf6 15.Qh1 Qe7 16.Qh6 Nf8 with Black intending to castle queenside.

Horwitz Defense/English Defense



Position after 1...e6
White to move

The Horwitz Defense, **1.d4 e6**, is named for 19th century German master and writer Bernhard Horwitz.

Black's opening move usually transposes into another opening:

French Defense – 1.d4 e6 2.e4 d5

Sicilian Defense – 1.d4 e6 2.e4 c5 3.Nf3

Benoni Defense – 1.d4 e6 2.c4 c5 3.d5

Queen's Gambit Declined – 1.d4 e6 2.c4 d5

Dutch Defense – 1.d4 e6 2.c4 (or 2.Nf3) 2...f5

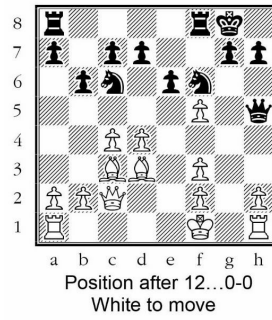
Nimzo-Indian or Bogo-Indian – 1.d4 e6 2.c4 Bb4+

The English Defense, **1.d4 e6 2.c4 b6**, is a unique opening starting with 1.d4 e6.

3.e4 Another variation is 3.Nf3 Bb7 4.g3 Bb4+ 5.Bd2 Bxf3 6.exf3 Bxd2+ 7.Qxd2 d5 8.Nc3 Ne7.

3...Bb7 4.Qc2 Qh4 5.Nd2 Bb4 6.Bd3 f5 7.Nf3 Bxd2+ 8.Kf1 White can also recapture on d2.

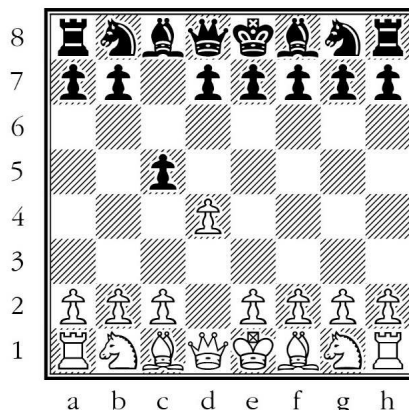
8...Qh5 9.Bxd2 Nf6 10.exf5 Bxf3 11.gxf3 Nc6 12.Bc3 0-0



White has two bishops against two knights, but a partially exposed king.

White also has an extra pawn but the f-pawns are tripled isolated pawns.

Old Benoni Defense



Position after 1...c5
White to move

1.d4 c5 is called the Old Benoni Defense.

The Old Benoni differs from the Benoni Defense in that White hasn't advanced the c-pawn to c4. It has a few variations that are unique from the Benoni or Modern Benoni.

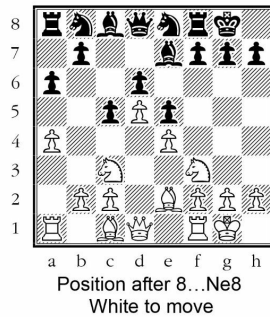
2.d5 White can also play 2.dxc5 e6 3.Nc3 Bxc5 4.Ne4 d5 5.Nxc5 Qa5+ 6.c3 Qxc5 7.Nf3.

2...e5 Other Black moves usually lead in into main lines of the Benoni Defense.

3.e4 d6 4.Nc3 White can also play 4.Bb5+, 4.c4, 4.Nf3, or 4.Bd3.

4...Be7 Another variation for Black is 4...a6 5.a4 Be7 6.Nf3 Bg4.

5.Nf3 Nf6 6.Be2 0-0 7.0-0 a6 8.a4 Ne8



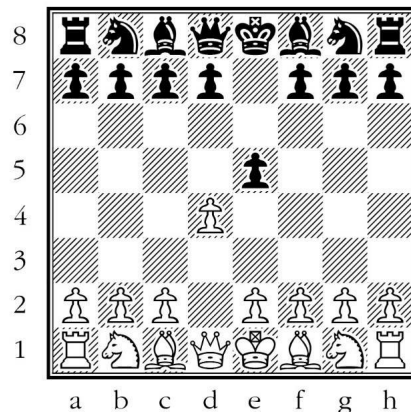
With the center blocked, battles will take place on the flanks.

Black would like to exchange the bad dark-squared bishop that is blocked by friendly center pawns.

White's kingside knight often heads to c4.

The game could continue 9.Nd2 Bg5 10.Nc4 Bxc1 11.Qxc1 Nd7 12.a5.

Englund Gambit



1.d4 e5 is the Englund Gambit named for the late 19th and early 20th century Swedish player Fritz Englund who sponsored a thematic tournament where all the games started 1.d4 e5 2.dxe5 Nc6 3.Nf3 Qe7 4.Qd5.

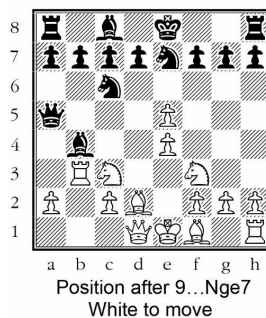
2.dxe5 Nc6 2...d6 3.exd6 Bxd6 gives Black a small lead in development as some compensation for the pawn.

3.Nf3 Qe7 An alternative for Black is 3...Nge7 4.Bf4 Ng6 5.Bg3 Bc5.

4.Bf4 White can also play 4.Qd5 f6 5.exf6 Nxf6 6.Qb3 d5 7.Bg5 or 4.Nc3 Nxe5 5.e4.

4...Qb4+ 5.Bd2 After 5.Nc3 Qxf4, White can play 6.Nd5 forking the queen and pawn on c7.

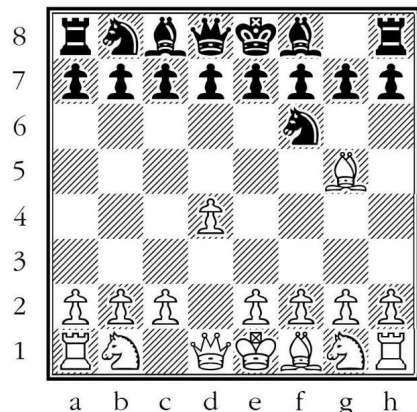
5...Qxb2 6.Nc3 Bb4 7.Rb1 Qa3 8.Rb3 Qa5 9.e4 Nge7



White has more space in the center, but a weak pawn structure.

The light-squared bishops need to be developed and both players plan to castle kingside.

Trompowsky Attack



Position after 2.Bg5
Black to move

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 is the Trompowsky Attack named after the 1939 Brazilian champion Octávio Trompowsky. 2.Bg5 avoids common opening systems Black may choose like the King's Indian Defense, Nimzo-Indian Defense, and Grünfeld Defense.

2...Ne4 Black can also play 2...d5 3.Bxf6 exf6 4.e3 Bd6 or 2...e6 3.e4 h6 4.Bxf6 Qxf6 5.Nc3 d6.

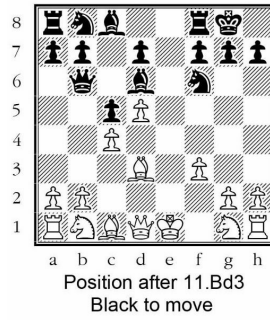
3.Bf4 Another variation is 3.Bh4 c5 4.f3 g5 5.fxe4 gxh4 6.e3 Bh6 7.Kf2.

3...c5 3...d5 4.e3 c5 5.Bd3 Nf6 6.c3 Nc6 is also playable for Black.

4.f3 Qa5+ 5.c3 Nf6 6.d5 Qb6 Black can set up a Sicilian Dragon pawn formation with 6...d6 7.e4 g6.

7.Bc1 e6 8.e4 exd5 9.exd5 Bd6 Alternatives for Black are 9...d6 and 9...Be7.

10.c4 0-0 11.Bd3



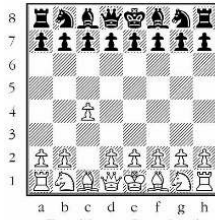
Both players need to develop queenside pieces.

White plans on playing Ne2 and castling kingside.

Flank Openings

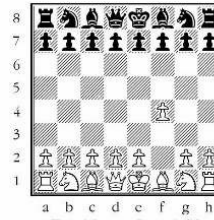
1.c4

English Opening



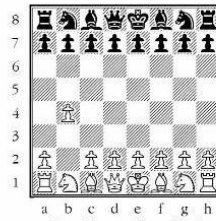
1.f4

Bird's Opening



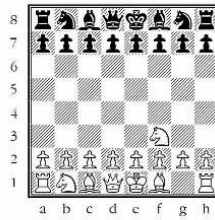
1.b4

Sokolsky Opening



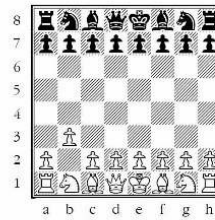
1.Nf3

Zukertort Opening

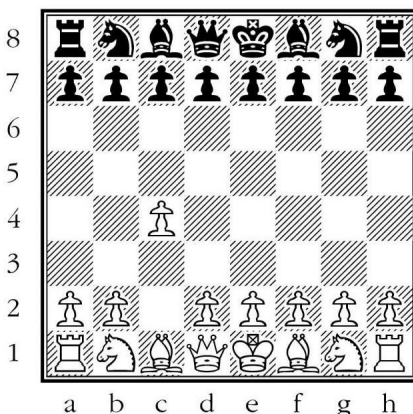


1.b3

Larsen's Opening



English Opening



Position after 1.c4

Black to move

In the English Opening beginning with **1.c4**, White fights for the center in hypermodern style by attacking the d5 square from the flank.

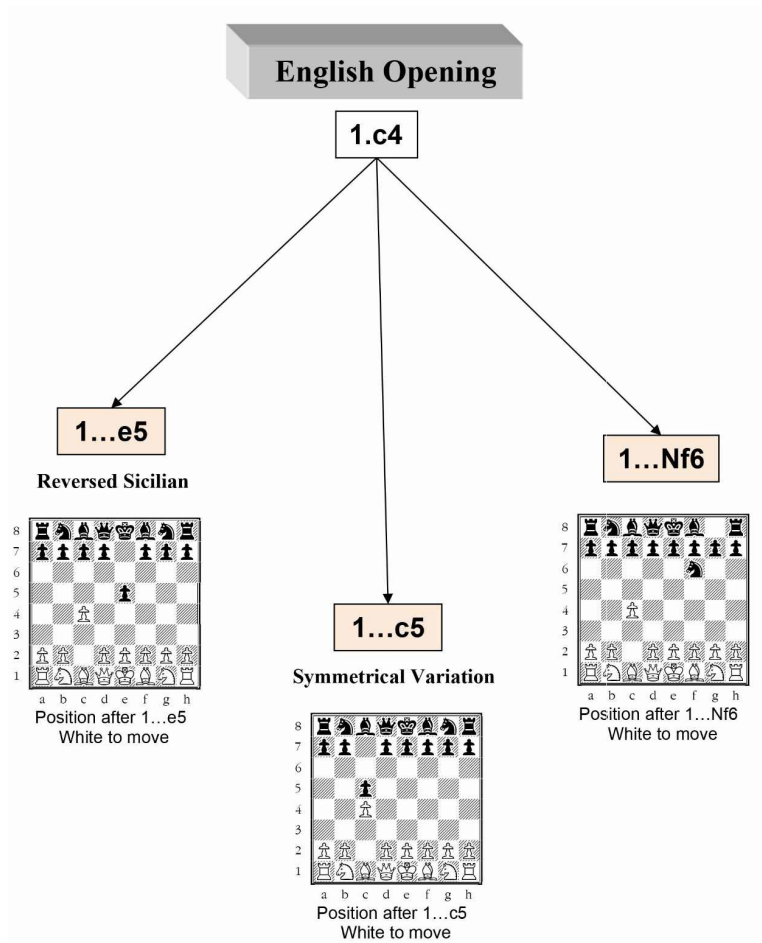
The English Opening is named for English players, in particular Howard Staunton, who played it during an 1843 match and in the first international tournament held in London in 1851.

Depending on Black's response, the English often transposes into openings beginning with 1.d4 like the Queen's Gambit, Slav Defense, King's Indian Defense, and Dutch Defense.

White can avoid the Nimzo-Indian Defense and Grünfeld Defense by playing the English Opening.

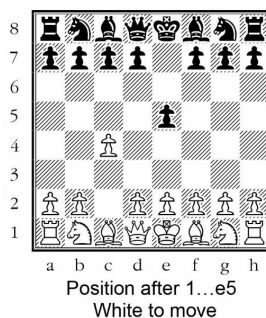
Unique variations in the English Opening occur when Black plays the Reversed Sicilian, 1...e5, and the Symmetrical Variation, 1...c5.

1.c4 Nf6 can also lead to unique variations from Queen's Pawn openings that begin 1.d4 Nf6.



Reversed Sicilian

1.c4 e5 is called the Reversed Sicilian since the position mirrors the Sicilian Defense, 1.e4 c5.



2.Nc3 White can also play 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 c6 4.d4 exd4 5.Qxd4 or 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4 Bb4+ 5.Bd2.

2...Nf6 Black can develop the other knight with 2...Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.e3 d6 6.Nge2 Nge7. Black can also play 2...Bb4 3.Nd5 Bc5 4.Nf3 c6 5.Nc3 d6 6.d4 exd4 7.Nxd4 Nf6 or 2...d6 3.g3 f5 4.Bg2 Nf6.

3.Nf3 The Reversed Dragon is 3.g3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.Bg2 Nb6 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.0-0. Another variation is 3.e3 Bb4 4.Nge2 0-0 5.a3 Bxc3 6.Nxc3 d5 7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.Qc2.

3...Nc6 4.g3 d5 This is the main starting position for the Reversed Sicilian. Black can also develop the dark-squared bishop with 4...Bb4 5.Bg2 0-0 6.0-0 e4 7.Ng5 Bxc3 8.bxc3 Re8 or 4...Bc5 5.Bg2 d6 6.0-0 0-0 7.d3 h6.

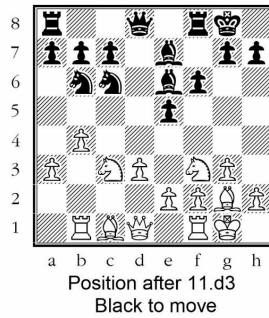
5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.Bg2 Nb6 7.0-0 7.d3 or 7.a3 usually transpose to the variation below.

7...Be7 8.a3 Another line for White is 8.d3 0-0 9.Be3.

8...0-0 Black can also play 8...a5 9.d3 0-0 10.Be3 Be6.

9.b4 Be6 10.Rb1 The game can also continue 10.d3 a5 11.b5 Nd4.

10...f6 11.d3



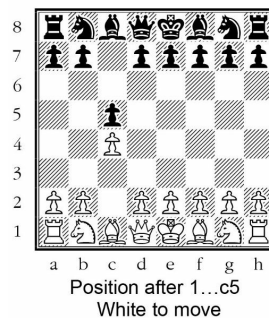
White's queenside expansion is supported by the fianchettoed light-squared bishop and the knight on f3 can transfer to the queenside.

Black controls the central d4 and d5 squares.

Possible continuations are 11...Nd4 12.Nd2 c6 and 11...a5 12.b5 Nd4.

Symmetrical Variation

1.c4 c5 is the Symmetrical Variation of the English Opening.



There are many transpositions developing the knights toward the center to their natural squares.

A common theme is the battle over the d4 and d5 center squares.

2.Nf3 The Ultra-Symmetrical Variation is 2.Nc3 Nc6 (or 2...Nf6 3.g3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.Bg2 Nc7 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.0-0 e5) 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.Nf3 e5 6.0-0 Nge7 7.d3 0-0.

2...Nc6 A sample line of the Hedgehog Variation is 2...Nf6 3.Nc3 e6 4.g3 b6 5.Bg2 Bb7 6.0-0 Be7 7.d4 cxd4 8.Qxd4 d6 9.b3 0-0. The Double Fianchetto Variation is 2...Nf6 3.g3 b6 4.Bg2 Bb7 5.0-0 g6 6.Nc3 Bg7. Another variation Black can choose is 2...g6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.e4 Nf6 6.Nc3 d6 7.Be2 Nxd4 8.Qxd4 Bg7.

3.d4 The Symmetrical Four Knights Variation is 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.g3 (or 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 e6) 4...g6 5.Bg2 Bg7 6.0-0. Another variation is 3.g3 e5 4.Nc3 g6 5.Bg2 Bg7 6.0-0 Nge7.

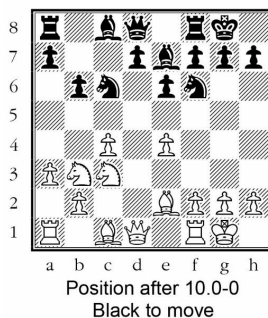
3...cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 Black can also play 4...g6 5.e4 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Nc3 d6 (or 7...Ng4 8.Qxg4 Nxd4 9.Qd1 Ne6) 8.Be2 0-0 9.0-0 Bd7, 4...Qb6 5.Nb3 e6, or 4...e6 5.Nc3 Nf6.

5.Nc3 e6 Black can also fianchetto the bishop with 5...g6 6.e4 d6 7.Be2 Bg7 8.Be3 0-0.

6.a3 White can also play 6.g3 Qb6 7.Nb3 Ne5 8.e4 Bb4 9.Qe2 d6 10.f4 Nc6 11.Be3 Bxc3+ 12.bxc3 or 6.Ndb5 d5 7.Bf4 e5 8.cxd5 exf4 9.dxc6 bxc6 10.Qxd8+ Kxd8 11.Rd1+ Bd7 12.Nd6 Bxd6 13.Rxd6.

6...Bc5 Black can also develop the bishop with 6...Be7 7.e4 0-0 or play 6...d5.

7.Nb3 Be7 8.e4 0-0 9.Be2 b6 10.0-0



Both players are safely castled kingside.

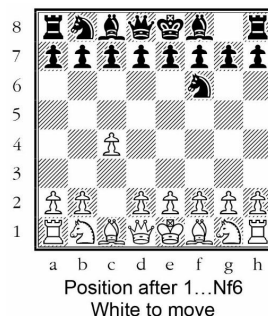
Black plans to fianchetto the light-squared bishop and develop the rook on a8 to the half-open c-file to pressure the c4 pawn.

White has pressure on the half-open d-file.

A key square in this position is d5.

1...Nf6

1.c4 Nf6



2.Nc3 If White plays 2.d4, the game transposes into Queen's Pawn openings.

2...e6 If 2...g6, White can play 3.e4 to prevent Black from playing the Grünfeld Defense. A unique variation is 2...g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 0-0 5.Nf3 (or 5.e4 d6 6.Nge2 c5 7.0-0 Nc6) 5...d6 6.0-0 Nc6 7.d3 e5 8.Rb1 a5.

2...e5 transposes to the Reversed Sicilian and 2...c5 to the Symmetrical Variation.

After 2...d5, the game could continue 3.cxd5 Nxd5 4.g3 g6 5.Bg2 Nxc3 (5...Nb6 6.d3 Bg7 7.Be3 Nc6) 6.bxc3 Bg7

7.Rb1 Nc6 8.Nf3 0-0.

3.e4 is called the Flohr-Mikenas Attack named for Soviet Grandmasters Salo Flohr and Vladas Mikenas. 3.d4 allows Black to play 3...Bb4, transposing to the Nimzo-Indian Defense.

The Nimzo-English is 3.Nf3 Bb4 4.Qc2 0-0 5.a3 Bxc3 6.Qxc3 b6 7.b4.

3...d5 3...c5 4.e5 Ng8 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.d4 cxd4 7.Nxd4 Nxe5 8.Ndb5 a6 9.Nd6+ Bxd6 10.Qxd6 f6 is a variation where White sacrifices a pawn for active piece play in the center.

4.e5 White can also trade pawns with 4.cxd5 exd5 5.e5 Ne4 6.Nf3.

4...d4 Alternatives for Black are 4...Ne4 and 4...Nfd7.

5.exf6 dxc3 6.bxc3 White can also play 6.fxg7 cxd2+ 7.Bxd2 Bxg7 8.Qc2 Nc6 9.Nf3 Bd7 10.Bd3 Qe7 11.a3 0-0-0 12.0-0-0.

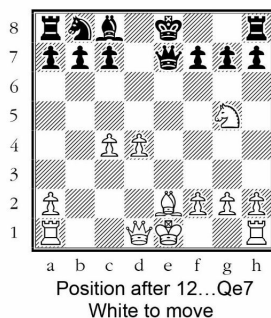
6...Qxf6 7.Nf3 Another line is 7.d4 c5 (or 7...b6 8.Nf3 Bb7) 8.Nf3 cxd4 9.Bg5 Qf5 10.cxd4.

7...e5 Black can also play 7...c5 or 7...b6.

8.d4 Also playable is 8.Bd3 Na6 9.0-0.

8...exd4 9.Bg5 Qe6+ 10.Be2 Be7 Black can also play 10...f6.

11.cxd4 Bxg5 12.Nxg5 Qe7

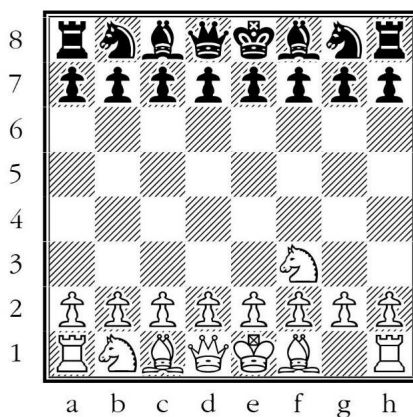


Both players plan on castling kingside.

Black needs to develop the queenside pieces.

White's queenside rook usually moves to the half-open b-file.

Zukertort Opening



Position after 1.Nf3
Black to move

The Zukertort Opening, **1.Nf3**, is named for 19th century World Champion contender Johannes Zukertort.

1.Nf3 is a flexible move that often transposes into other openings.

For example, 1...c5 2.e4 transposes to the Sicilian Defense.

1...Nf6 allows White to transpose into Queen's Pawn Openings with 2.d4 or the English Opening with 2.c4.

1...d5 usually transposes into Queen's Pawn Openings after 2.d4.

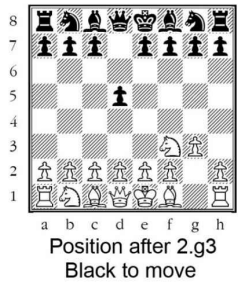
After 1...d5, White can play the King's Indian Attack, 2.g3, or the Réti Opening, 2.c4.

Zukertort Opening

1.Nf3 d5

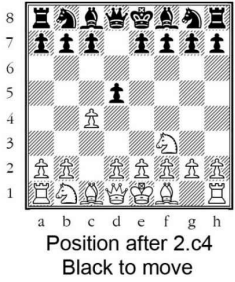
2.g3

King's Indian Attack



2.c4

Réti Opening



King's Indian Attack

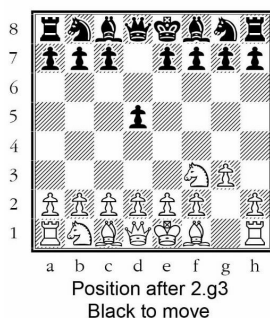
The King's Indian Attack is a relatively modern opening system that usually begins **1.Nf3 d5 2.g3**.

The opening mirrors the King's Indian Defense with the colors reversed where White has an extra tempo.

White plans to fianchetto the kingside bishop, castle kingside, move the center pawns to d3 and e4, and develop the queenside knight to d2.

Black cannot reasonably prevent White from setting up this King's Indian Attack structure.

Also see the King's Indian Attack French in the French Defense section of this book.



2...Nf6 Black can also play **2...Bg4 3.Bg2 Nd7 4.c4 e6 5.cxd5 exd5 6.0-0 Ngf6 7.d3 Bc5 8.Qc2 0-0** or **2...c6 3.Bg2 Bg4 4.0-0 Nd7 5.d3 Ngf6**.

3.Bg2 c6 Black can also play **3...e6 4.0-0 Be7 5.d3 0-0 6.Nbd2 c5, 3...g6 4.0-0 Bg7 5.d3 0-0 6.Nbd2 c5 7.e4 Nc6, 3...Bf5 4.0-0 e6 5.d3 Be7 6.c4 c6, or 3...c5 4.0-0 Nc6 5.d4 e6 6.c4 dxc4**.

4.0-0 White can also fianchetto the queenside bishop with **4.b3 Bf5 5.Bb2**.

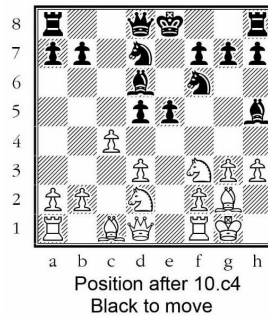
4...Bg4 Other options for Black are **4...Bf5 5.d3 e6 6.c4 dxc4 7.dxc4 Qxd1 8.Rxd1 Nbd7** and **4...g6 5.b3 Bg7 6.Bb2 0-0**.

5.d3 Nbd7 6.Nbd2 White's other choices are **6.c4 e6 7.cxd5, 6.Qe1 e5 7.e4, and 6.h3 Bh5 7.Qe1 e5 8.e4.**

6...e5 Black can also play **6...e6.**

7.e4 Bd6 Another variation is **7...dxe4 8.dxe4 Bc5 9.h3 Bh5 10.Qe1 0-0.**

8.h3 Bh5 9.exd5 cxd5 10.c4 attacking Black's pawn center.



White needs to develop the queenside bishop and rook. The rook on f1 plans on moving to the half-open e-file.

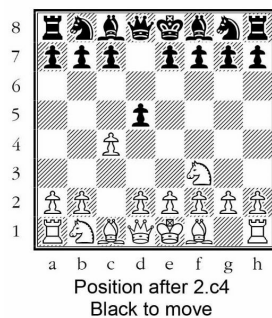
Black plans to castle kingside and likely move the rooks to c8 and e8.

Réti Opening

The Réti Opening, named for Czechoslovakian master Richard Réti who was one of the top players in the world in the 1910s and 1920s, is **1.Nf3 d5 2.c4.**

In hypermodern fashion, **2.c4** attacks Black's **d5** pawn from the flank.

The Réti Opening can transpose into the Queen's Gambit Declined, Slav Defense, Semi-Slav, or Catalan Opening.



2...c6 Other variations Black can choose are 2...e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.0-0 0-0 6.b3 c5 7.Bb2 Nc6 8.e3 b6, 2...d4 3.g3 Nc6 4.Bg2 e5 5.d3 Nf6 6.0-0 Nd7 7.e3 Be7, or 2...dxc4 3.e3 Nf6 4.Bxc4 e6 5.0-0 c5 6.Qe2 a6.

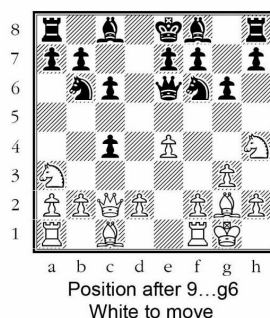
3.g3 Other lines unique to the Réti are 3.e3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6 5.b3 Nbd7 6.Bb2 Bd6 7.Qc2 and 3.b3 Nf6 4.Bb2 Bf5 5.g3 e6 6.Bg2.

3...Nf6 Black can also play 3...Bg4 4.Bg2 e6 5.0-0 Nd7.

4.Bg2 dxc4 4...Bf5, 4...Bg4, and 4...g6 are also playable.

5.0-0 Nbd7 6.Na3 White can also play 6.Qc2 Nb6 7.a4 a5 8.Na3 Qd5 9.Ne1.

6...Nb6 7.Qc2 Qd5 8.Nh4 Qe6 9.e4 g6



Black is a pawn ahead but behind in development.

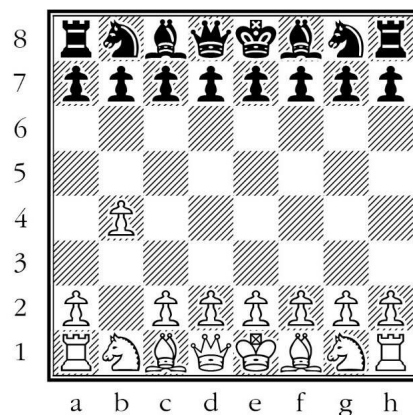
Black intends to fianchetto the dark-square bishop and castle kingside.

White needs to develop the queenside bishop and rook.

White may play b3, in order to fianchetto the bishop,
allowing Black to exchange the extra pawn on c4.

White would like to play d4 to control the center with pawns.

Sokolsky Opening



Position after 1.b4
Black to move

The Sokolsky Opening (sometimes referred to as the Polish Opening), **1.b4**, is named for the 20th century Russian master and opening theoretician Alexey Sokolsky.

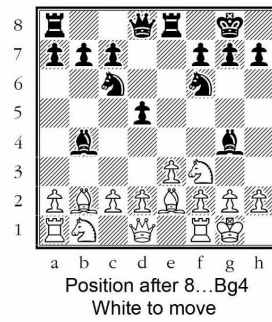
White claims space on the queenside and prepares to fianchetto the queenside bishop in hypermodern fashion. The downside is that White allows Black to control the center with pawns.

1...e5 Black can also play 1...d5, 1...Nf6, 1...c6, or 1...e6.

2.Bb2 An alternative line is 2.a3 d5 3.Bb2 Bd6 4.Nf3.

2...Bxb4 3.Bxe5 Nf6 4.Nf3 White can also play 4.c4.

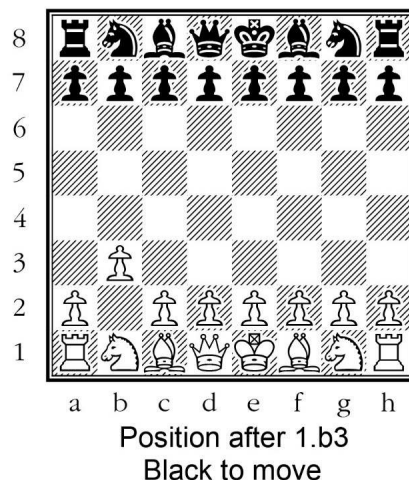
4...Nc6 5.Bb2 d5 6.e3 0-0 7.Be2 Re8 8.0-0 Bg4



White has an extra center pawn and needs to develop the queenside knight and rook.

Black has more space in the center with a half-open e-file and a lead in development with well-placed pieces.

Larsen's Opening



Larsen's Opening, **1.b3**, is named for Danish Grandmaster Bent Larsen who was one of the top players in the world for much of the 1960s and 1970s.

White prepares to fianchetto the queenside bishop to exert pressure on d4, e5, and Black's kingside in hypermodern fashion.

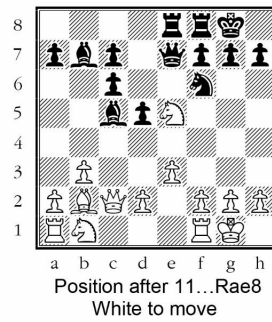
1...e5 Black can also play **1...d5 2.Bb2 Nf6 3.e3 g6 4.c4 Bg7** or **1...Nf6 2.Bb2 g6 3.e4 d6 4.g3 Bg7 5.Bg2 0-0**.

2.Bb2 Nc6 An alternative is **2...d6 3.e3 Nf6**.

3.e3 White can also play **3.c4 Nf6 4.e3 d5 5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.a3 Bd6 7.Qc2**.

3...d5 4.Bb5 Bd6 5.Nf3 An alternative variation for White is **5.f4 Qh4+ 6.g3 Qe7 7.Nf3 f6 8.Nc3**.

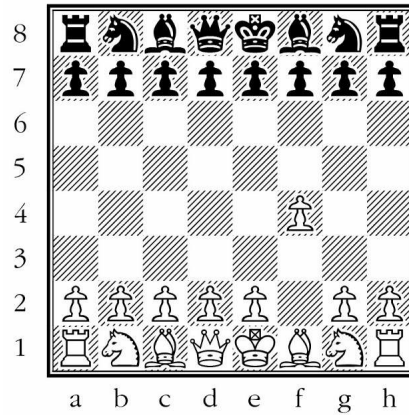
5...Qe7 6.c4 Nf6 7.c5 Bxc5 8.Nxe5 0-0 9.Bxc6 bxc6 10.Qc2 Bb7 11.0-0 Rae8



White controls e5 and has pressure on the half-open c-file but needs to develop the queenside knight and rook.

Black has the bishop pair but also doubled c-pawns.

Bird's Opening



Position after 1.f4
Black to move

Bird's Opening, **1.f4**, is named for late 19th century English master Henry Bird.

White attacks the e5 square from the flank at the expense of weakening dark squares near the king.

1...d5 is Black's most common response, mirroring the Dutch Defense with the colors reversed. Black can also play the From's Gambit, **1...e5 2.fxe5 d6 3.exd6 Bxd6 4.Nf3 g5 5.g3 g4 6.Nh4 Ne7**.

2.Nf3 Nf6 Black can also play **2...g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 Nf6 5.0-0 0-0 6.d3 c5**.

3.e3 c5 4.b3 Nc6 5.Bb5 Pinning or eliminating the c6 knight increases White's control over e5.

5...Bd7 6.Bb2 e6 7.0-0 Be7 8.d3 0-0 9.Bxc6 Bxc6 10.Ne5 Rc8 11.Nd2



White controls e5 and wants to expand and attack on the kingside.

Black has more space and wants to attack on the queenside.

GLOSSARY

algebraic notation chess language that describes a move by naming the moving piece and the square it moves to

artificially castling see castling by hand

asymmetrical pawn structure a pawn structure where the pawns are not symmetrical, when one player has a pawn on a file where the opponent does not (also see half-open file)

attacker a piece that attacks an opposing piece

back rank another name for the first rank, the rank closest to the player behind the pawns in the game's starting position

back rank mate a checkmate that occurs when the king is attacked on the back rank by a queen or rook and his escape is blocked by his own pawns or pieces

backward pawn a typically weak base pawn on a half-open file that may be easily attacked by the opponent's pieces, especially the rooks

bad bishop a weak bishop usually blocked by its own pawns, limiting its mobility

base pawn the pawn in a pawn chain that is closest to the player and has no pawn to protect it

bishop (symbol – B) a minor piece worth three pawns that moves diagonally in any direction until it runs into another piece or the edge of the board

bishop pair the advantage of having both bishops, typically against a bishop and knight or two knights; worth about half a pawn in open positions

Black player with the dark-colored pieces who moves second in the game

Black move a move by the player playing the Black pieces written in algebraic notation by giving the move number, followed by three periods, and then the move; for example 1...Nf6

“book” or “book moves” a standard or well-known opening

move or line in chess theory

breaking a pin eliminating a pin, giving the pinned piece the freedom to move

candidate moves reasonable moves that make sense without calculation; the player's main choices for their move

capture when a piece moves to a square where an opposing piece is resting and removes the opposing piece from the board

castling a special move that usually occurs in the opening where the king moves two squares away from the center with a rook moving one square past him and the only time a player can move two pieces in one turn

castling by hand a maneuver made when a king has typically lost the right to castle but can achieve a castled position in several moves by first moving the king off the back rank to allow the rook to move past him toward the center followed by the king retreating to the back rank behind his pawns

castling long castling queenside

castling short castling kingside

center the middle of the board that includes the squares d4, d5, e4, and e5

centralizing the king strategically moving the king toward the center of the board where he can join the battle, typically occurring in the endgame

check when a player's king is under attack and threatened to be captured

checkmate the end of the game which occurs when a king is put in check with no way of escaping

closed pawn structures a position with pawns blocking each other, thereby restricting the movement of the pieces

combination a series of moves that are played in an exact sequence to gain an advantage

counterattack an attack mounted by the player who is initially defending

counter gambit when a player offers a gambit in response to the opponent's gambit

dark-squared bishop a bishop that moves on the dark squares

defender a piece that defends another of its own pieces

developing a piece (also called development) when a piece (knight, bishop, rook, or queen) moves off its starting square to a better square, increasing its power

diagonal a slanting row of squares whose color is the same

discovered attack moving a piece and attacking an opponent's piece with a bishop, rook, or queen hiding behind the piece that moved

discovered check moving a piece and checking the opponent's king with a bishop, rook, or queen hiding behind the piece that moved

discovery a type of double attack where the moving piece can attack an opponent's piece or critical square, while also uncovering a threat from a long-range piece behind it

double attack a fork or discovered attack where the moving piece also attacks an opponent's piece

double check a discovered check where the moving piece also checks the king

doubled isolated pawns two pawns lined up vertically on the same file with no pawn on a file next to them that can protect them

doubled pawns two pawns lined up vertically on the same file that have a pawn on a file next to them that can provide protection

draw a chess game ending in a tie where both players receive half a point in a tournament

endgame the phase of the game when only a few pieces are still on the board

en passant ("in passing" in French) a special pawn capture that exists for only one move and occurs when a pawn on the fifth rank captures an opposing pawn on an adjacent file

that advanced two squares forward, as if it only moved one square forward

exchange an equal trade of pieces in terms of material

exchange sacrifice to voluntarily trade a rook for a bishop or a knight, also known as giving up or sacrificing the exchange

fianchetto an Italian word meaning to develop a bishop to the square directly in front of where a knight starts the game (b2, b7, g2, or g7) where the bishop is on the longest possible diagonal on the board and can attack both of the center squares of its color

files vertical columns of eight squares on the chessboard identified by a letter from a to h

forcing moves a series of moves (often checks) that force a response from the opponent, keeping him from carrying out his plan

fork a common tactic that occurs when a piece or pawn attacks two or more pieces at once

gaining a tempo gaining a move by creating a threat

gambit when a player sacrifices material (usually a pawn) in the opening to gain some kind of compensation, like an attack on the king, the initiative, or time to quickly develop pieces

grabbing pawns a risky way to win pawns, since it takes time and gives the opponent a chance to make gains in piece activity

half-open file a file where one player has a pawn and the other player doesn't have a pawn

hanging a piece or pawn left unguarded and exposed to capture

hole a weak square that cannot be attacked by a pawn, ideal for an opponent to occupy with a piece

hypermodern theory opening theory developed in the 1920s and 1930s where a player allows the opponent to occupy the center with pawns with idea of undermining the center, often from the flanks, like fianchettoing a bishop

initiative having the attack and being able to dictate the direction of the game

isolated passed pawn a pawn that has the weakness of being isolated but the strength of being passed

isolated pawn a weak pawn that doesn't have pawn on a file next to it that can provide protection

interpose to block or put in between

king (symbol – K) the most valuable chess piece that cannot be captured and moves one square at a time in any direction as long as that square is not attacked by an enemy piece

kingside the half of the board where the kings begin the game (the e-, f-, g-, and h-files)

kingside majority having more pawns on the kingside than the opponent

knight (symbol – N) a minor piece worth three pawns and the only piece that can jump over other pieces, moving in the shape of a capital “L”

“knight on the rim is dim” a chess rhyme describing the location of a knight poorly placed on the edge of the board

light-squared bishop a bishop that moves on the light squares

line another word for a variation

long-range pieces bishops, rooks, and queens

losing a tempo losing a move

luft A German word meaning “air”, or room to breathe; moving a pawn up one square to create an escape square for a castled king to move in order to avoid a back rank mate

main line one of the most commonly played or popular lines

major pieces rooks and queens

material the sum of the values of the pieces

middlegame the middle phase of the game after the pieces have been developed, usually beginning around move ten and lasting until only a few pieces remain on the board

minor pieces knights and bishops

minority attack an attack by several pawns against a larger

group of pawns with the idea of weakening the larger group of pawns and opening up lines of attack

mobile pawns pawns that are not blocked and can move up the board quickly and easily

mobility see piece activity

open file a file not blocked by any pawns

open pawn structures a position with no pawns blocking the free movement of the pieces

opening the opening phase, or first ten or so moves of the game, when most of the pieces are developed and the kings typically castle

opening system a series of moves in an opening that leads to middlegames with similar strategic and tactical themes

opposite-colored bishops situation when each player has one bishop remaining on the board, with each bishop traveling on different colored squares where they cannot attack each other

opposite side castling when one player castles on the kingside and the other player castles on the queenside

outpost a strong square, usually in the opponent's territory, where a piece (usually a knight) is safe, protected by a pawn, and cannot be attacked by an enemy pawn

outside passed pawn the passed pawn furthest away from the other pawn clusters where the main battle will take place

overloading when a defensive piece is given an additional defensive responsibility which it cannot complete without abandoning its original defensive assignment

overprotection a preventative measure where multiple pieces defend the same point

overworked piece a piece that has to protect two pieces (or squares) at the same time that often can be taken advantage of tactically

passed pawn a pawn that can move all the way up the board to its promotion square without being blocked or captured by an enemy pawn

passive holding back; not aggressive

pawn (symbol – left blank) the least valuable piece that can only move in a forward direction, captures diagonally, and can promote to another piece, usually the queen, when it reaches the other side of the board

pawn arrow a line from the player's side of the board toward the opponent's side of the board made by a pawn chain that is locked up on two or more files; pawn arrows point in the direction where the player has more space and generally wants to attack

pawn chain pawns on files next to each other that are connected in a diagonal line, so they protect each other

pawn grabbing snatching a pawn away from where the main action is taking place before completing development, giving the opponent time to gain an advantage in piece mobility

pawn island pawn groups separated from other pawn groups by one or more files (generally it is worse to have more pawn islands since the pawns have fewer friendly pawns to protect them)

pawn storm a tactic in which several pawns on adjacent files are moved in rapid succession toward the opponent's defenses

piece activity having pieces on good squares where they can move freely and have multiple options

pieces knights, bishops, rooks, queens, or kings (pawns are referred to as pawns)

pin when a long-range piece (queen, rook, or bishop) attacks an opponent's piece that is shielding another piece of greater value

“playable” move or variation a move or variation that is reasonable to consider playing

positional variation (or positional line) a variation where tactics aren't the main theme; for example, more closed positions where the opponents play for open lines, good pawn structure, space, strong squares, outposts, etc.

process of elimination a decision making process where, to find the best move, you eliminate legal moves that you determine are clearly not the best move; see also candidate moves

protected when a piece is defended by another piece, usually making it a bad idea for the opponent to capture it

protected passed pawn a passed pawn that is protected by a neighboring pawn

queen (symbol – Q) a major piece worth nine pawns and most powerful piece on the board that moves in any direction in a straight line horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, until it runs into another piece or the edge of the board

queenside the half of the board where the queens begin the game (the a-, b-, c-, and d-files)

queenside majority having more pawns on the queenside than the opponent

quiet variation (or line) a variation with few tactics where positional ideas are prominent

ranks the chess term for rows of eight squares that run horizontally across a chess board

removing the guard eliminating or forcing a piece to move that is protecting one or more pieces or squares

rook (symbol – R) a major piece worth five pawns that moves horizontally or vertically and left and right until it runs into another piece or the edge of the board

rook lift moving a rook forward, usually to the third rank, and then in front of pawns on the second rank, where it can then attack on a file into the opponent's territory

sacrifice giving up material in order to gain some other type of advantage or checkmate

Scholar's Mate (also known as the four-move checkmate) a quick, easily avoided checkmate pattern where one player wins by bringing his queen out early in the game

skewer a type of tactic that is the reverse of a pin, where the more valuable piece is in front of the less valuable piece

space an element of chess, related to piece activity, referring to the number of squares controlled by each of the players

starting position where the pieces are located at the beginning of all chess games with White to move

symmetrical pawn structure a pawn structure where on each file one player has a pawn, the other player has a pawn opposing it

tactical variation (or sharp line) a variation where the position is more open, requiring tactical calculation

tactics immediate threats and attacks that make up the battles between pieces

target a weakness in the position the attacker can attack; sometimes a piece, sometimes a square

tempi two or more moves, relating to time

tempo a single move, relating to time

threat an aggressive move that attacks an opposing piece

trade pieces to exchange pieces of equal value

transposing moves changing the move order to reach the same future position

tripled isolated pawns three pawns lined up vertically on the same file with no pawn on a file next to them to provide protection

tripled pawns three pawns lined up vertically on the same file with a pawn on a file next to them that can provide protection

uncastled king a king that has not castled and is usually in the middle of the board

variation a specific alternative sequence of moves and counter moves

weakness a pawn or square that can be easily attacked by the opponent and is difficult to defend

White player with the light-colored pieces who moves first in the game

White move a move by the player playing the White pieces written in algebraic notation by giving the move number,

followed by a period, and then the move; for example,
15.Nf3

winning the exchange gaining a rook for a knight or bishop

7th rank the rank where the opponent's pawns begin the game

8th rank the rank furthest away from the player, where his own pawns would promote; also where the opponent's pieces begin the game

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Zukertort Opening

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

At age six, Todd learned how to play chess from his father, Alan Bardwick, an expert strength tournament player. Alan utilized many of the chess teaching ideas presented in Chess Detective workbook series.

Back in the 1970's, when few children played in rated chess tournaments, Todd consistently improved his game and was nationally ranked in his age group.

After leading his high school chess team to several state titles, Todd went to college and graduated first in his class from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 1985 with a B.S. in Civil Engineering. After college, he moved to San Diego for five years where he worked as a rocket scientist (structural analyst).

Moving back to Denver in late 1989, he worked as an entrepreneur and continued playing chess. In 1993, Todd achieved the National Master title awarded by the United States Chess Federation.

Of Todd's numerous tournament achievements, most notable is winning the Denver Open Championship five consecutive years (1992-1996) against strong competition, where his performance rating was over 2400.

Beginning in 1993 until the newspaper's closing in 2009, he wrote a popular monthly chess column in the Rocky Mountain News, one of the nation's largest newspapers.

In 1995, Todd founded the annual Rocky Mountain Chess camp which is one of the oldest chess camps in the country. Students come from across the nation to participate in the camp.

In 2002, "The Chess Detective" column was born in *School Mates* magazine. From 2003 to 2017, "The Chess Detective" was featured in *Chess Life for Kids*, the national children's chess magazine published by the United States

Chess Federation.

For over a quarter of a century, Todd has been one of the country's leading full-time chess-teaching masters. He has taught well over 15,000 chess classes and is a Professional Chess Coach (Level V), the highest level recognized by the United States Chess Federation. Having a STEM background, Todd's logical and fun approach to the game and reputation as an excellent teacher inspired him to found the Chess Academy of Denver where he teaches well over 750 students per year through private lessons, school classes, chess camps, and year-round camp workshops for adults and children.

Educationally, Todd runs school district chess programs, teaches in Gifted and Talented programs, and trains parents and teachers how to effectively teach chess to children in their school enrichment programs to improve a child's math skills using chess as a vehicle. Todd also regularly trains elementary school teachers who want to learn how to incorporate chess and its educational benefits into their classrooms.

Todd's students have achieved accolades in life and chess. Successes include gaining early admission to top universities, like Stanford and Yale, becoming Presidential Scholars, being ranked number one in chess in the United States for their age group and winning numerous state and national chess titles.

In 2004, Todd completed his first book, *Teaching Chess in the 21st Century – Strategies and Connections to a Standards-Based World*, a comprehensive guide to teaching chess as part of the elementary school math curriculum.

The success of *Teaching Chess in the 21st Century* prompted Todd to write the companion book, *Chess Workbook for Children – The Chess Detective's Introduction to the Royal Game* in 2006 which is currently translated into

three other languages and is sold throughout the world.

Published in 2010, *Chess Strategy Workbook – A Blueprint for Developing the Best Plan* is an intermediate book that teaches how to think logically during the game and develop the correct plan.

In 2019, Todd published *Chess Tactics and Combinations Workbook – Winning the Battles Between the Pieces* and *Attacking the Chess King Workbook – Patterns and Strategies for Successful Attacks*. Along with *Chess Strategy Workbook*, these books form a series for the intermediate level and rated chess player.

In 2019, Todd also published *Chess Concepts and Coloring Book for Kids*, a coloring and beginner book for younger kids.

In 2020, Todd published *Chess Handbook – Rules, Tactics, and Strategies for the Improving Player*, a comprehensive chess book for beginner and intermediate players.

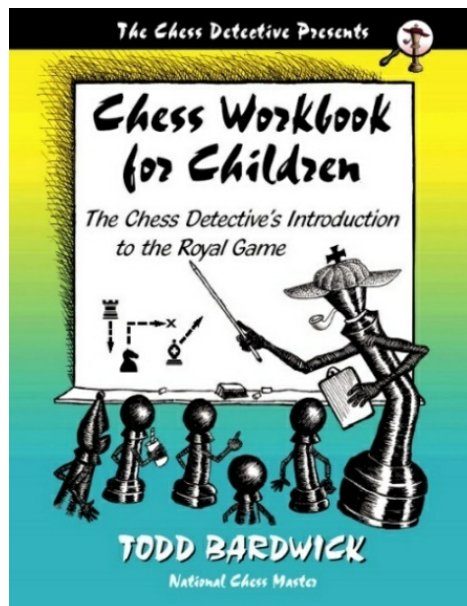
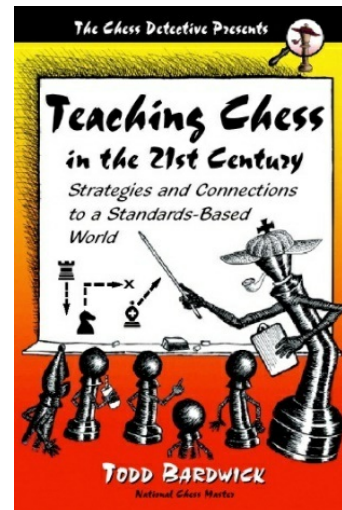
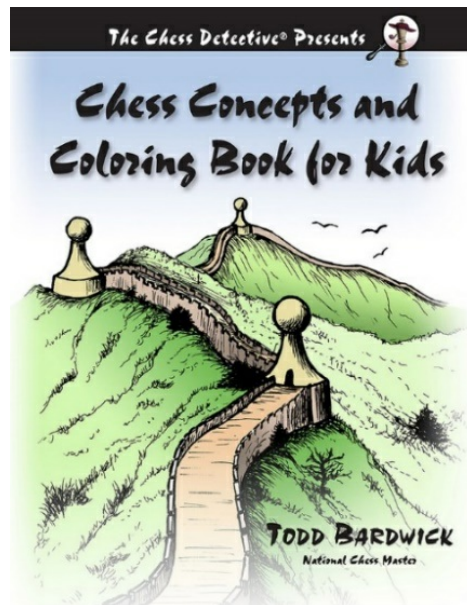
Published in 2021, *Chess Endgame Workbook – Acquiring Skills to Win Close Games* expands the series for the intermediate level and rated chess player.

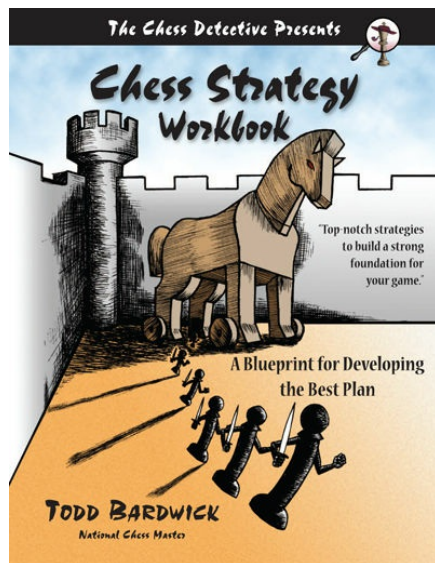
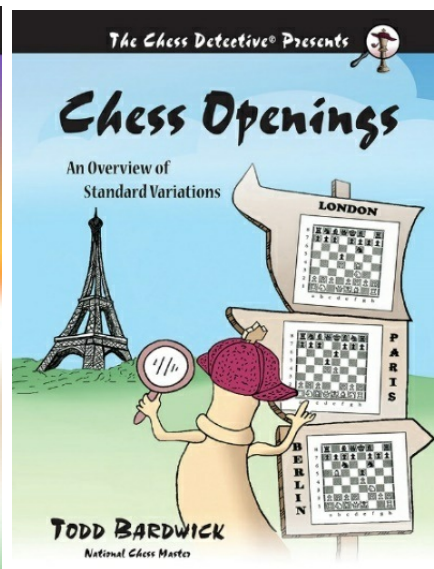
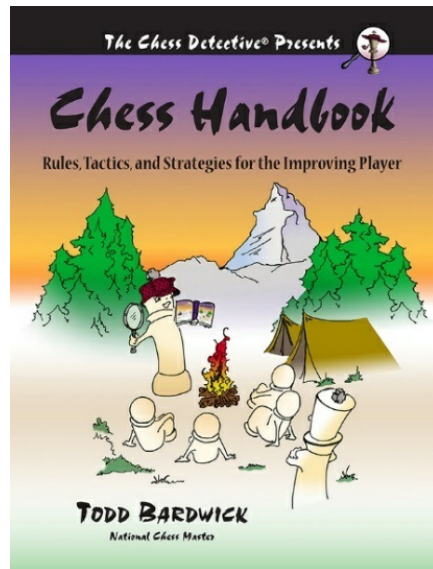
Published in 2022, *Chess Openings – An Overview of Standard Variations* gives major and minor opening variations with easy-to-read flow charts to aid the reader in selecting suitable opening systems to begin their games.

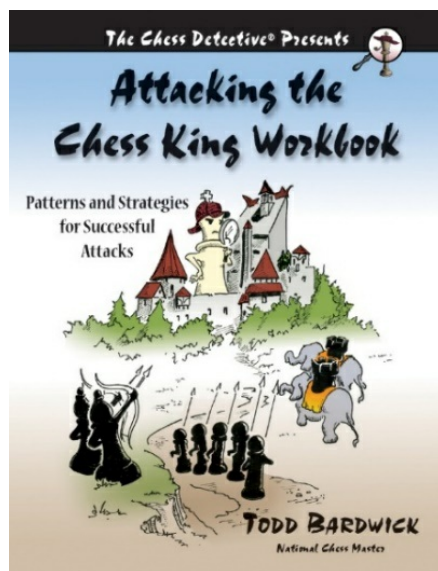
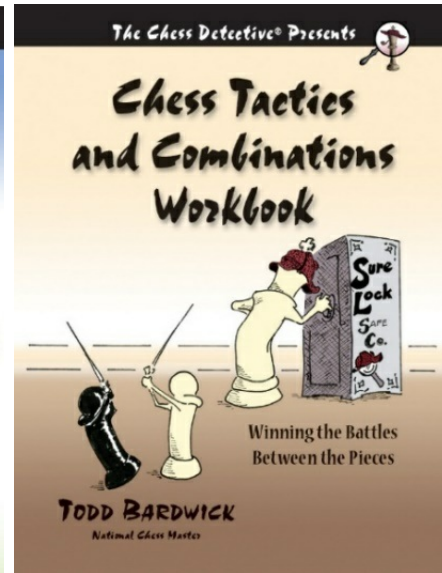
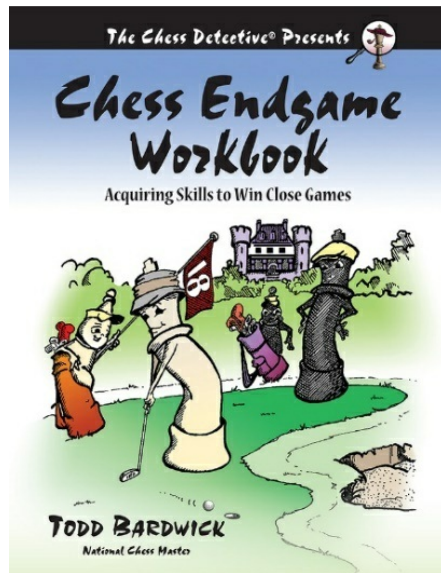
Todd is available for speaking engagements, chess teacher training, chess lessons, chess classes, and simultaneous chess exhibitions. Todd can be reached through his website at www.ColoradoMasterChess.com.



Chess Detective Press







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